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THE

MONOMANIAC.

THE

MONOMANIAC:

OR,

⁂

SHIRLEY HALL ASYLUM.

BY

WILLIAM GILBERT.

NEW YORK:
JAMES G. GREGORY, 540, BROADWAY.
1864.

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THE MONOMANIAC.

CHAPTER I.

THE AUTHOR INTRODUCES HIMSELF TO THE READER.

THERE are few tasks more unpleasant than for an author to introduce himself to his reader. In my own case it is almost painful, for I am accused of laboring under a mental infirmity, although few people are more perfectly free from a misfortune of the kind than I am. I, a perfectly sane man, have already been confined in one private asylum for the insane for five long years, and when at last I escaped from it, it was merely to enjoy a week's liberty, and then to be again incarcerated—though, perhaps, that may be considered too strong a term to use towards those, including my dear wife, who, under error, have deprived me of my personal liberty, yet who have treated me the while with the greatest kindness and consideration.

Although I protested my sanity in the most earnest and reasonable manner to those who held me under restraint, although not one word nor thought not in perfect conformity with calmness and intelligence escaped me during my residence in Shirley Hall Asylum, yet I cannot blame those under whose charge I was placed for holding a disbelief of my sanity; for all the different monomaniacs who were, during my residence there, my companions in misfortune, protested as eagerly as myself

against the injustice they imagined themselves laboring under, and evidently with conviction on their minds that they had reason on their side. I am bound, however, to admit there was not one among them who was not most judiciously, either for his own interest or that of the community at large, deprived of a considerable portion of his personal liberty, so clearly established in my eye was the fact of his partial insanity.

Again, I cannot in conscience accuse those of my family who placed me under restraint with any intentional unkindness or injustice. Looking over my career in life, especially during the two years previous to their interference with my personal liberty, I am perfectly willing to admit that to those not well acquainted with my inventions, and the certainty of my being able to carry them out, if my pecuniary means had been equal to my ability, I might have presented a strong *prima facie* proof of incapacity in managing my own affairs, so much so, in fact, as perfectly to justify them in the eyes of the world. More than that, I am perfectly willing to acknowledge that before they took proceedings against me, three-fourths of the small fortune I once possessed had vanished; and to them my dear wife and child appeared on the verge of ruin. Probably they were so; for it is doubtful whether the remainder of my possessions would not have fallen short, and then I should have been unable to carry out my designs to that point from which I could have obtained remunerative return.

You will doubtless inquire, gentle reader, why I did not explain my invention to some friend capable of understanding it, and through his means obtain the amount necessary for its completion. I could easily have done so, had not my invention opened the road to certain pro-

jects, which, in other hands, might have led to terrible consequences. Even in my own it frightened me, and after all, sometimes I am inclined to believe my confinement was the beneficent act of a Divine Providence to keep me from an ambition, which might, at last, have placed me in an antagonistic position to the Deity himself, for it thus prevented me committing a deed of presumptuous blasphemy, which might have brought on me a punishment not less terrible, and as well deserved, as that inflicted on the enemy of mankind and his fallen angels.

On glancing my eye over the few lines I have written, I cannot help suspecting, reader, that you have already begun to entertain a doubt of my sanity. Indeed, you do me an injustice; I am not mad. Have yet a little patience and I will prove it. Before proceeding further in the task I have set myself, let me give you a short sketch of my own history, unreservedly, and then judge of me as you please. I have little fear of your verdict, for you will decide honorably, I am sure; and if I once clear up the fact of my sanity, you will have greater faith, I trust, in the recital of the singular adventures I met with during my sojourn in the asylum.

To begin then. My father held an appointment in the East India Company's service for many years. He married while he was in India, and I was the only child of that union. When I was about four years of age my father's term of service expired, and we all left India for England. He established himself in a town on the southern coast, and I was brought up, under his own immediate superintendence, at a school in the neighborhood. When I had attained my eighteenth year, my father sent me to Oxford, preparatory to entering me as a law student in the Temple, for which profession he had

a strong predilection. My own taste was not consulted on the occasion, or I should have chosen the profession of a civil engineer, as I had always entertained a great love for the study of natural philosophy, and had, for a young man, made considerable progress in it. I candidly believe it was the vocation for which nature had designed me.

After I had taken my degree at Oxford, I entered earnestly on the study of the law. My father placed me for two years with a special pleader, and, although with little love for the study, I conscientiously believe I did my profession no discredit. The year before I was called to the bar my mother died. She had been a great invalid for some years, and although her death greatly shocked me, it did not take either my father or myself by surprise, for we had been for some months almost daily expecting it.

The year following my call to the bar, my father died suddenly of apoplexy. At the time of his death he was not rich, although he had been in the enjoyment of a good income for many years. He left me a trifle more than eight thousand pounds, which I immediately invested in India bonds; and I then determined to live scrupulously within my income, looking to any increase of expenditure above the interest to which I was entitled, to whatever money I might make by my profession.

Although I still continued at the bar, I made a sort of compromise with the profession I should have chosen, had I been permitted to follow the bent of my own inclination. I determined to confine myself solely to the law of patents; and by following it and studying it assiduously, I not only obtained considerable lucrative employment, but got a great insight into mechanics and chemistry as well.

When I was about twenty-seven years of age, I married a young lady of good family, but portionless. She had, however, been well and economically brought up; so that, although we had two children, a girl and a boy, which naturally increased our expenses, we still continued to live considerably within our income.

After I had been married about eight years, I was prostrated by a fever, which, from being neglected at its outset, terminated in a severe attack of typhus. I was for some weeks delirious. When I recovered my senses I found a great change in my dear wife. She was incessantly bursting into tears, and frequently, when she imagined I was asleep, she appeared almost broken-hearted. It was doubtless, I imagined, from anxiety and exhaustion in watching me. She had, I was informed, nursed me night and day, and the air and confinement of the sick-chamber now began to tell upon her. Great as my sorrow was at the change in her appearance, it increased the intense love I bore her; and I now, weak as my mind still was, looked on her with feelings little short of adoration. Fearing she might be attacked by the disease, I begged of her to leave me, especially as the dangerous crisis had passed, and she had now no longer need of any anxiety. The children had been removed, I found, to a friend's house, to be out of the way of danger, and I proposed to her she should join them, if only for a week or ten days, till her strength and spirits should be somewhat recovered. My advice was useless; she thanked me for the suggestion, but positively declined to follow it. Indeed, my request, which I repeated more than once, had the effect of producing so severe an attack of weeping, that I gave up the attempt, and allowed her to remain without further objection on my part.

One morning, when that peculiar feeling of prostration was over me which is so frequent in the first stages of recovery from a severe attack of fever, I heard the doctor's knock at the door; unwilling to be questioned by him at the time, a childish determination came over me to pretend to be asleep. A few minutes afterwards I heard him enter the room in company with my wife. On perceiving the slumber in which I apparently lay, they spoke together in a whisper, the doctor asking simply questions relative to my state of health, and my wife giving a description of my progress since his last visit. Presently they conversed in a lower tone, indeed, one so low I could hardly catch the subject of their conversation. One thing I could clearly understand—my wife was sobbing bitterly, while the doctor was apparently trying to console her; at last he inquired in a somewhat louder tone—

"Is he aware of it yet?"

"Oh no," said my wife. "I dare not mention it to him. It would kill him if I did. I have a very difficult task, though, to keep it from him, for when I think of the terrible misery which awaits him, I cannot restrain my feelings. On two or three occasions I feared he was on the point of detecting me." After a few more remarks had passed between them, the doctor took his leave.

When he had gone, the state of feeling I found myself in would be difficult to describe. Though alone in the room, and perfectly aware of the fact, I did not open my eyes. I lay there motionless as a corpse, and apparently tried to persuade myself I was asleep. I did not even attempt to arouse myself. I think I tried to believe I was under a delusion. This artificial stupor I continued to keep up for some minutes; at last I was

obliged to awake to the sad realities of life. I then thought as clearly as I could over what I had heard. Even then, not one thought disrespectful to my dear wife crossed my mind, although the few sentences I had caught might have formed an excuse for the suspicion. That some terrible misfortune hung over me I was certain, and as I am not of a disposition to shirk for any length of time a danger which in the end I must meet, I determined that, as soon as my wife entered the room, I would question her on the subject, and not rest till I was fully aware of what particular sorrow awaited me.

A few minutes afterwards she entered.

"Are you awake, dear?" she said, as she approached the bed with a painful artificial smile on her face. "The doctor has just been here; but he would not let me disturb you, as you were fast asleep at the time. He says you are going on quite as well as he could expect, and he has no doubt he will soon be able to pronounce you convalescent."

"I was perfectly well aware of his visit, Mary," I replied; "and heard, if not all, at least so much of his and your conversation that I must hear more. Come, sit down by the bed-side, dearest, and tell me all the truth. Whatever it may be, believe me, I have strength of mind sufficient to bear it."

Mary appeared at first astonished and frightened, but, quickly recovering herself, she did as I requested. Having placed herself beside my pillow, she took my hand in hers, and then told me, in a voice broken by her sobs, the terrible fact that my little daughter had also been seized by the same fever that I had suffered from, and had succumbed in a few days to the violence of the disease.

Unless, reader, you could know how fondly I loved

that dear child, it would be useless on my part to attempt to make you understand my feelings when I fully realized the dreadful intelligence. My heart seemed crushed by it. Weak and helpless, I lay there and wept like a loving woman over the dead body of her first-born. The shock was too great for my strength, and the fever returned. Delirium shortly afterwards came on; but while it harassed the little strength I had left, it had also the grateful effect of shutting the world from me while I was under its influence. Thanks to a naturally good constitution; thanks, a thousand times more thanks, to the unremitting attention and care of my dear wife; and thanks more than all to the merciful decree of a God of mercy, I recovered, though miserably slowly.

After I left my bed, it was many weeks before I left my room, and some months afterwards before I was able to leave the house. Painfully, both to mind and body, did health return to me. When, fitfully, a little strength returned to me, a singular phenomenon generally occurred, which brought on so painful a depression of spirits that I soon lost the slight advantage I had gained. While stretched on my easy-chair, supported by pillows, my little fair-haired girl would continually appear as standing at my knee; her clear blue eye watching me intently, and a smile on her sweet angel face, such as at the moment she might have worn in Paradise. The moment I gazed at her she vanished, and the grief it caused me told on my health for some days afterwards.

At last I was able to leave the house; and shortly afterwards I made an attempt to occupy myself again with my profession, but my strength was not equal to my will. I then determined on following the advice of my medical attendant, which was, during my convales-

cence, and, in fact, till my health was thoroughly established, to reside quietly at the sea-side, keeping my mind in the mean time as undisturbed as possible. With some little difficulty, we discovered a cottage to let a short distance from a fashionable watering-place. This we engaged, and in a few days, with my wife and son, I was domiciled in it. My health here gradually improved, and in a few weeks I was able without difficulty to walk some distance from the house. In my rambles my wife and son generally accompanied me, indeed, their society was almost a necessity for me to prevent my thoughts running on the terrible loss I had sustained. My leisure hours I filled up with attending to the education of my son; it was to me both an occupation and an amusement. I was especially anxious to instruct him well in my old hobby, natural philosophy, and as Edgar also seemed to have as innate a love for the study as I possessed myself, he made in it considerable progress in a very short time. He was naturally quick, and liked study, and altogether a good tractable boy.

One rainy day, while amusing himself in a lumber-room at the top of a house we inhabited, he found an air-gun. He was naturally much surprised at its singular construction, and he brought it down stairs for me to explain it to him. I readily did so, and showed him the way to charge it, but I could not do it myself, as the instrument requisite to condense the air was wanting. Edgar immediately set to work in the lumber-room to find it, and in a little time succeeded. The rain having subsided, we immediately commenced operations, and amused ourselves by repeatedly loading and discharging it.

Knowing, as I am convinced I did, the principles on which it acted, I was much surprised, in the evening,

when thinking over the subject, at the singular results the elasticity of the liberated air produced. The more I reflected on the subject the more extraordinary it appeared. How was it, with the small amount of muscular power I had used to charge it, such strange effects could be produced? How was it that the mechanical power employed in ejecting the balls in succession was greater than the force used to charge the gun?

I slept little that night, for I could not drive the subject from my thoughts. The next morning, immediately after breakfast, I called Edgar, and we again went through our experiments. I calculated as correctly as I could the amount of muscular force requisite to charge the gun, and then the amount of momentum requisite to carry the balls the distance they they were thrown. I then tried to throw them by the arm, but of course the distance they reached was not a fiftieth part of that to which they were propelled by the condensed air. I made every allowance for the loss of power in the arm, and every other contingency which presented itself at the time to my mind, or which on reflection I could conjure up, still the increase of force obtained over the amount of force used to obtain it appeared inexplicable.

Day after day I thought over this phenomenon, and many were the experiments I performed, without once being able to find a flaw in my theory. Again I reflected, if this enormous increase of force could be obtained by condensing the atmospheric air in the chamber of the air-gun, why could not a similar law in mechanics be applied to some grand motive-power, some magnificent invention to benefit mankind, instead of being employed as an instrument of destruction. At last I determined, if possible, to carry out to some good use the

motive power I had discovered; and, after due reflection, I resolved to apply it to the purpose of navigation. If I succeeded in the plan I proposed, it would supercede steam, with all its cumbrous appliances of water, fuel, and heat; a vast amount of manual labor might also be saved, as well as an immense economy of space, an incalculable desideratum in navigation, especially in long voyages, and all danger from fire, perhaps the most terrible in steamships, be avoided.

I now diligently set to work to complete my plans. I invented a vessel with a round broad bow. I took the breast of a swan as my model for form. In the centre of this, I constructed a funnel-shaped tube, conducting to an instrument at once a receiver and condenser. Above the receiver was the cylinder, which received the liberated air from the condenser, and thereby worked the piston-rod. This was the most difficult and expensive portion of my labors. The funnel had to be placed horizontally in the bows, and I was obliged to have my condenser on a level with it, so that I was unable to work with a screw, as I wished, both for economy and convenience, and to content myself with paddles.

I have not yet spoken of the manner I proposed raising my motive-power for the primary condensation of the air. As the vessel would rise on the crest of the wave, the impetus it would acquire in its fall would drive the air with sufficient force through the funnel into the condenser; so that, in two or three successive falls, the air would be sufficiently compressed to create on its expansion a power vastly superior to that used in its condensation, as shown in the air-gun. This power would, of course, be amply sufficient to move the piston-rod, and the stronger should be the wind and the

waves against me, the greater would be the power I should obtain.

I now commenced building my boat; but as an invention of the kind was too valuable to throw away wantonly, I determined to take out a patent to protect myself. This I accomplished at a very considerable expense. I did not, it is true, patent the whole of my plans, but only some of the mechanical movements, without which it would be impossible for any one to succeed in imitating my system. My boat, also, which was about twelve tons burden, cost me considerably more than I had anticipated. The machinery also was not only very expensive, but I so frequently required alterations to be made in it, that the original estimate was at least more than doubled. Again I had to protect myself by other patents, as I found fresh alterations were required, and these also increased my expenses; so that by the time my boat was completed, what with the builder's account, machinery, and patents, the whole cost was not less than two thousand pounds. A considerable portion of this expense I concealed from my wife, but still she was aware of so much of it as made her, on more than one occasion, express herself in stronger terms of disapprobation than I had hitherto ever heard her make use of.

At last my boat was finished, and I longed intensely for her trial trip. A favorable opportunity soon occurred; a strong breeze sprang up from the south-west, and raised a rather heavy sea—in fact, such a one as I had anticipated was necessary for the success of my experiment. I had great difficulty in getting any one to assist in manning her; but at last I succeeded in finding two young sailors, who said they would undertake it if well paid, adding that they had little to fear, as they were

excellent swimmers. I was rather annoyed at this remark, as it implied the possibility of danger; but I concealed my displeasure as well as I could.

I had moored the boat a short distance from the shore, but I hired another to put my sailors on board. At last the anchor was weighed, and an attempt was made to bring her head to the wind. Unfortunately, I soon found out that although my knowledge of mechanics might assist me on some occasions, my skill in ship-building was most faulty.

The boat would not keep her head to the wind for a moment together, but invariably fell into the trough of the sea, broadside first. Of course, all this was useless; so I again cast anchor, and then determined on waiting till I got my impetus first, and as soon as I was certain the air was sufficiently condensed, to slip my cable, and stand out to sea. The plan was adopted, but the result of this experiment was as unsuccessful as the former; for I found, when she lifted on the crest of the wave, one of her paddles invariably over-balanced her, and, as before, her beam first touched the water, and the power I wished to gain was lost; so I determined on relinquishing my experiments for that day, and, at my leisure, think coolly on the way to avoid failure for the future. I must say that evening when I presented myself to my dear wife, I wore a somewhat downcast expression of countenance, but she had the good heart and sound sense to make no remark whatever on the failure of my experiment.

I now attempted to remedy the faults in the construction of my boat. I did away with the paddle-wheel, and adopted a screw in the best manner I could in its place. This was also a considerable expense to me, as almost the whole of my machinery had to be re-model-

led; and a new patent I had to take out to protect my interest in the new adaptation increased the amount enormously.

I will not describe my second experiment—suffice it to say it was as unsuccessful as the former. I now discovered the cause of my failure was the small size of my boat; it was clear no craft under two hundred tons would succeed. Its rounded form in the bows was also an objection, at least, if as round as I had determined on in the model. The machinery I am sure, in a proper-built vessel, would have acted admirably.

Misfortune too frequently breeds ridicule, and it was so in my case. I was now so assailed with jeers and absurd remarks on the bad success of my experiments, that my patience gave way under it. I therefore determined to give up for the time any further attempts at ship-building; so I quitted my cottage, and returned with my wife and child to London.

I now attempted to devote my time exclusively to the practice of my profession, but I found it impossible. The knowledge of the tremendous discovery I had made perpetually haunted me, and upbraided me with my folly in not giving it to the world, and, by so doing, increase both my reputation and my fortune. I could now calmly look at my former failure, and I easily and perfectly understood the cause. To commence again on a scale commensurate with the certainty of success was far beyond my pecuniary means, and I determined to turn my thoughts to some other plan of utilizing the power I had discovered. An idea, and one perfectly practicable, soon presented itself, without the many difficulties to surmount I had met with in the construction of my boat. I now determined to apply the power to impelling locomotive engines on ordinary railways. I

was certain of success; and I immediately commenced, unknown to my wife, the construction of my working model.

It would be useless to explain all the mechanical arrangements in my newly-invented locomotive engine—suffice it to say they were to a certain extent identical with the funnel-shaped apparatus mentioned in my former experiment. Day after day I was occupied in watching the construction of my model, and night after night I reflected on the progress made during the day, and considered what portions of the work would be gone on with on the morrow. All went on well till about a fortnight before the experiment was to be made, when a hitherto unforeseen difficulty arose, and which I had not for a moment calculated on. If the momentum increased in proportion with the amount of atmospheric resistance it met with in its passage, how should I be able to stop the engine when once it had acquired any thing approaching a considerable velocity?

This difficulty startled me to such a degree, that I immediately gave orders to stop the completion of the working model. Day and night did I study how I could overcome the difficulty, but without success; on the contrary, it became greater the more I studied the question. While thinking on the subject, the remark of Archimedes was perpetually presenting itself to my mind—"If he had but a fulcrum for his lever, he could move the world." Here appeared to me both the fulcrum and the lever, and far more than both, combined in my invention. It was tremendous. What it would lead to it was impossible to imagine. By using my force, instead of wasting it, I could quadruple it; if this again were used, and a similar result obtained, which would be a certainty, and then again increased in an equal propor-

tion, what at last would it arrive at? especially with the extraordinary knowledge of mechanics possessed by the present generation.

I now applied myself more deeply than ever to the study of the question, and its difficulties increased in proportion to the attention I gave it. I almost at last was inclined to think it was too vast for human imagination to compass, and was on the point of relinquishing it when suddenly the whole matter appeared to me in so clear a light, and all its tremendous combinations were placed so perfectly before me, that I almost trembled at the power that appeared placed in my hands. It pointed out to me in the most perfect manner how these forces might be accumulated till they reached the Infinite, and then some occult voice whispered in my ear that I could place myself in a position antagonistic in power to the Deity himself. I need hardly say this terrible blasphemy caused me the most exquisite pain. I grieved for my sin night and day. I prayed earnestly that I might be relieved from the power I possessed, and that the knowledge of it might fade from my memory; but all in vain, for it still haunted me. Satan himself seemed to be incorporated in me, and told me how I could accomplish the destruction of the universe. I fought against the idea, but uselessly; and I was on the point of escaping from it by the lesser sin of self-destruction. This also I strove to avoid, and to that end I prayed incessantly. In my office, in the streets, in bed, at my meals, a prayer was always on my lips. My dear wife and my friends perceived the distress of mind I was laboring under, but they knew not the cause. They wrongly attributed it to a disturbed brain, and took steps to place me under restraint. More than once I was on the point of explaining all to them, and thus to

prove I was not insane; but I dreaded if my secret were known, whether some other might not apply the power I possessed, and the effect might then be as terrible as if I had used it myself. I therefore resolved to sacrifice myself for the benefit of the world, and submit quietly to the restraint they wished to place upon me. I did so, and the result was my confinement in Shirley Hall Asylum.

I have now, reader, given you a sketch of my history, and my invention, as far as prudence will allow me. Let me now ask you the question, but pray answer me candidly—Am I mad?

CHAPTER II.

MY FIRST DAY IN THE ASYLUM.

When my wife and friends had decided that I was incapable of managing my own affairs (a decision admitted to be correct by the Commissioners of Lunacy), I was first placed, for a short time, in the house of a medical friend, who had formerly had considerable experience in insane cases, but who was now engaged in general practice. I was, however, merely to reside with him till some definite arrangements could be made with the proprietors of a highly respectable private asylum, which was situated in one of the midland counties. This establishment, known as Shirley Hall Asylum, consisted of two branches, and was carried on in two separate houses in the same grounds. In the one were confined only those who were confirmed lunatics; in the other, those who were only in a slight degree deranged, or, as in my own supposed case, only harmless, and, otherwise, rational monomaniacs. Although on the same grounds, the two establishments were carefully separated from each other by a high brick wall, and, with the exception of a door for the use of the doctor, which was always kept locked, there was no communication between them. The proprietor resided in London, but visited the establishments frequently. The general superintendence was, however, intrusted to an assistant-physician, a Dr. Meadows, who resided with his wife and two children in the house set apart for those whose malady was of

the lighter description. More than half his time, however, was spent in the other establishment. He was a talented, amiable man, and treated those whose misfortunes had placed them under his care with the greatest skill, kindness, and consideration.

The house in which I was to reside with the less afflicted had formerly been the dwelling of a family of wealth and importance. It was of great size—I should say, without exaggeration, it contained fifty or sixty rooms, without counting the offices. Considerable alteration, however, had to be effected before it was used for its present occupants. The windows, without any thing apparently different from those in general use, on a close examination, were found to open only from the top, and then only to such an extent as would prevent any poor creatures from being able to commit self-destruction by throwing themselves out. Five rooms had to be thrown into one to form a dining-room, and the drawing-room had also been very considerably enlarged, The furniture through the whole house was solid, simple, and good, and every thing was kept in a state of perfect order and cleanliness.

Although the house was approached from the high road, there was no view of it either from the ground or first floor windows, in consequence of the high wall which encircled the whole of the establishment. On the second floor there was an extended view over a large common, on which frequently exercised the soldiers of an infantry regiment quartered in the neighboring town. On the upper floor, all the partitions between the bedrooms in front of the house had been removed, so as to form a long corridor, for the exercise of the patients in cold or wet weather. In the back attics was a row of sleeping-rooms for the servants of the establishment.

A small wing, which had been added to the house after it had been built, was appropriated entirely for the residence of Dr. Meadows and his family.

I arrived at the asylum about four o'clock one fine summer's afternoon, and was introduced to Dr. Meadows. The reception he gave me was that of a courteous host receiving a welcome guest. His manner was kind and gentlemanly, and this pleased me the more, as I feared I should find the detestable affected tone of superiority occasionally adopted by those in charge of asylums of the kind. "You will find us here, I trust," he said, "if a secluded, at least a contented family; and, I am happy to say, we have not one at our table who has not been brought up in good society. We meet together every day at dinner—that is a rule of the house; at breakfast we are not so particular; still I like to see my friends about me before nine o'clock, if possible, as we then meet for family prayers."

I asked him if there were many in the house. "Not many," he said; "we have several vacancies at present. I have been very fortunate lately in my cures, and I hope soon to restore more than one of my patients in a perfectly sane state to their friends. Let me now," he continued, "show you your bed-room. We dine at five o'clock, but the servant will inform you when it is ready."

My bed-room was somewhat small, though neat, and in perfect order, and in every respect its arrangements pleased me greatly. After the doctor had left me, I attempted calmly to think over my position. If I should like my fellow-companions in misfortune, I had little to grieve for. True, I was separated from my wife and son, but they had promised to take lodgings near me in the neighboring town, as soon as my residence in Lon-

don was disposed of, so that I might see them frequently. I must also acknowledge that I felt a certain sort of security in my new abode. It was impossible for me now to pursue the studies which had caused me so much unhappiness, even to the prejudice of both body and soul. If I could not obtain the means of making my models, I felt I should be safe, as it was impossible for me to describe in words the mechanical combinations necessary to carry out my terrible secret. I now knew I could not possess that which perpetually tempted me, and which yet I trembled to be master of. The feeling of security I now enjoyed had something almost delightful in it; and after I had completed my simple toilet, I sat down on a chair by my bedside, and luxuriated in the thought of my perfect safety.

I was at last disturbed in my reverie by some one knocking at my door. It was one of the male attendants, who had been sent to inform me that dinner had been on the table more than a quarter of an hour. "Dr. Meadows, sir," said he, "forgot to tell me you were here, or I should have called you sooner." He then conducted me down stairs to the dining-room, where I found the other patients assembled, and Dr. Meadows presiding at the head of the table. "I beg your pardon," he said, "for having forgotten you. Pray, be seated. I will introduce you to our friends when dinner is over." I did as I was requested; but although apparently occupied with my meal, I was in reality engaged in studying the countenances of those who were for some time to come to be my companions. Although I found there were ten patients present, they were all, with two exceptions, gentlemen, and these, as stated by Dr. Meadows, had evidently been used to good society.

Of those who particularly riveted my attention

among the gentlemen of the first was a clergyman, a man between forty and fifty years of age. He was certainly a remarkably handsome, fine-looking man. I gazed for some time at him attentively, wondering what phase of insanity his might be; for I never saw a countenance more clear, intelligent, or unembarrassed than his, and his manner and language corresponded perfectly with it. I had myself but little conversation with him, for he that day occupied the foot of the table—Mrs. Meadows being absent from indisposition. The second was a man who talked fluently and well on almost every subject spoken of. His conversation was principally carried on with the doctor. They had got on politics, of which the patient seemed to know a great deal more than the man of science. This I afterwards found was easily to be explained, as Mr. Robinson had been for many years a public press writer of considerable celebrity. The third was a dandified little man, of, perhaps, forty years of age; yet, although carefully, and at the same time exceedingly well dressed, he appeared the only one among us of whom it was doubtful whether he was entitled to the position of a gentleman. He conversed principally with the ladies, with whom, however, he appeared to be but in little favor; and from the remarks I heard him utter, I was not surprised he stood no higher in their good opinions than he did. The ladies themselves seemed both well-educated women, who had evidently been used to excellent society, and both carried with them its tone and manner.

There was, however, no one present whose appearance and manner pleased me more than my immediately opposite neighbor—so much so, that I much regretted that I had not occupied the vacant chair which stood by his side, instead of the one on which I was seated. He

was, moreover, one of my own profession—a barrister; but although *esprit de corps* might have had something to do with the predisposition I had in his favor, it was far more a certain attractive amiability of manner and countenance that drew me to him. He was certainly little more than forty years of age, but he wore on his mild intelligent face an expression of placid sorrow, which at first sight made him appear to me some years older. We conversed principally together. In his conversation and manner there was not the slightest taint of insanity; on the contrary, I do not remember a man whose conversation and ideas were more lucid.

When dinner was over, Mr. Beauchamp, the clergyman, returned thanks to the Almighty for our repast; and the ladies left us. As soon as they were gone, I determined on going to the other side of the table, that I might talk more at ease with my new acquaintance, and I seated myself in the vacant chair by his side. He had not noticed my approach, being apparently absorbed in his own thoughts; but no sooner had I seated myself than his demeanor was changed in a moment. He sprung from his seat, and putting his hand upon my shoulder, attempted to thrust me from my chair with all the force he was master of, while his countenance exhibited uncontrollable violence and passion.

Naturally greatly irritated at this unprovoked rudeness, I rose from my seat, and was on the point of answering him most indignantly, when Dr. Meadows advanced, and placed himself between us, while the other patients formed a circle round us. "Excuse me," said the doctor, addressing me, "but I am certain you did not intend to insult or annoy Mr. Mainwaring. It was, I know, perfectly unintentional on your part." As he said this, he looked at me in an impressive manner,

as if he wished me to give in to his remarks; but I was so offended that I was on the point of rejecting his interference, when I saw a patient behind Mr. Mainwaring put his finger to his forehead, as if to indicate that insanity alone had prompted my assailant to behave as he had done. I immediately professed my sorrow for any unintentional offence I might have committed. Mr. Mainwaring merely bowed distantly in reply to my excuses, and, with great anger still visible on his countenance, he hurriedly left the room. When he had left us, Dr. Meadows took me aside, and told me he hoped I would think nothing more of Mr. Mainwaring's behavior.

"Poor fellow!" he continued, "he far more merits your sympathy than your anger. His story is his own, and I have no right to speak of it. His insanity has been greatly ameliorated since he has been here. When he first came I had the greatest difficulty in keeping him within bounds, so outrageous was he; but now he is perfectly calm and rational so long as nobody sits or stands by his left side, but then he instantly becomes as violent and irrational as you have seen him to-day. To-morrow his fit will have completely passed over, and you will then find him a most amiable, gentlemanly companion, so long as you do not come near his left side. All here know his peculiarity, and humor him in it, and I am sure you will be equally indulgent; besides, he has another claim on your consideration. He is in a deep decline, and cannot possibly live through the approaching winter."

I assured the doctor that all animosity on my part had passed over, and I would for the future respect the poor fellow's infirmity. The doctor then conducted me to the drawing-room, and introduced me to his wife, a

mild, amiable, lady-like looking young woman, but with the traces of care and anxiety already deeply printed on her handsome countenance. She received me with great kindness, and in her society and that of the two ladies I passed my first evening in the asylum.

CHAPTER III.

THE DOCTOR AT HOME.

THE next morning, after breakfast, I amused myself in strolling round the grounds, which were very extensive, and kept in admirable order. On entering one of the sidewalks I saw before me Mr. Mainwaring. I immediately determined to accost him, and apologize for the unintentional offence I had given him the previous evening. I soon overtook him, taking care to place myself this time at his right hand. He seemed pleased to see me, and received my excuses in a very friendly manner.

"I have no doubt," he said "you must have thought my behavior last night exceedingly singular; but if you knew all, you would readily pardon me. They here, I know, attribute my occasional burst of anger, when anybody comes near my left side, to insanity; but I assure you I am not mad—I believe I am the only sane person in the asylum."

I smiled at the poor fellow's idea of his own sanity, but I took good care not to let him perceive it. "I cannot blame the doctor, though," he continued, "for every patient here is of opinion he is in his right mind, and insists upon it as well. Yet, if their own assertions in that respect were to be relied on, and they could obtain their liberty, I am persuaded there is not one among them that would not soon bring on himself some terrible misfortune."

"Have you been long here?" I inquired.

obliged to encroach on the sleeping-room of my children, which is beside this, to make room for some of my pipes, and I am afraid I shall not have room for some of my lower-toned pipes without making an inroad into the room overhead."

"And when," I inquired, "do you consider your labor will be finished?"

"That," said he, smiling, "is the most painful part of my story. I might probably have been able to finish it in two years from this time, but unfortunately my purse by no means accords with my own willingness to labor. The expense appears to increase in proportion as I advance towards completion, and I fear that every farthing I can economize out of my scanty income for the next three years will barely suffice to allow me to terminate my work in the least expensive manner. What I dread most is, that I may discover, as I proceed, some grand improvement, which would be totally out of my power to carry out. Indeed, I have now an inkling of one or two, which, I believe, would raise my name to some celebrity if I could realize them, but I banish the idea from my mind as much as possible."

Mainwaring gave him a glance of pity as he made the avowal, and I inwardly thanked God I was not as that man. After a little more conversation in the same style, we thanked the doctor for the explanation he had given us, and we then left him to his labors.

CHAPTER IV.

MAINWARING'S CONFESSION.

It is not my wish to publish a diary of all that took place during my five years' residence in Shirley Hall Asylum; it is merely my intention to offer to the public a few of the incidents I there met with. One of the most singular anecdotes I have to relate arose from my acquaintance with poor Mainwaring. I took a great fancy to him, and a strong friendship arose between us, which at last ripened into a perfect intimacy. He was a remarkably intelligent, amiable man; and, with the exception of his singular monomania of never allowing any one to remain, even for a moment, at his left hand, there was not the slightest appearance of a disordered intellect about him. Our intimacy, however, did not last long. The terrible disease, consumption, under which he was laboring, terminated his existence about four months after our acquaintance had commenced. When first I knew him, to the unprofessional eye, there was little appearance of the disease about him, although he had a somewhat delicate expression of countenance; but as the autumn advanced the symptoms became strongly apparent. He used frequently to speak of his approaching end with so much pleasure, that had he not been of a very religious temperament, I should have thought his wish for death to be a portion of his mental disease.

One fine morning, in the early part of October, when

I met him in the grounds, after he had been confined for some days to his room, I was particularly struck with his altered appearance. Indeed, I never knew the disease to make so great a progress in so short a space of time. Although miserably emaciated, and so weak, he was obliged to lean for support on the arm of one of the attendants, he wore a peculiarly happy and serene expression of countenance. His eye brightened up when he saw me, and he advanced to meet me with as much haste as his feeble state would allow him.

"I am most happy to see you," he said, as he quitted the arm of the attendant to take mine. "I much wished to speak to you about some private affairs of my own. Are you at liberty for an hour or two?"

I told him my time was perfectly at his service.

"Then," said he, taking my arm, and at the same time dismissing the attendant, "let us sit down on yonder seat in the warmth of the sun, and we can then talk at our leisure."

When he had seated himself on the bench, he motioned to me to seat myself at his right hand.

"You see," said he, smiling, "the near approach of death has not cured me of what you are pleased to term my insanity. No, it will continue with me till the last moment of my existence; and if you are near me when I die, you will find the last faint movement of life will be towards the side I have so jealously kept from all intrusion."

"But," I said, avoiding his weak point, "I trust you are in error in imagining your end to be so near. Remember, also, that the settled conviction you appear to entertain—and I trust erroneously—that you cannot survive, rather increases the danger than otherwise. Remember, it is your duty to foster the life the Almighty

has given you as long as possible, and not needlessly to injure it."

"In the first place," he replied, "that which you wish me to avoid is, in my opinion, the greatest blessing that could befall me; and had I not been restrained by a religious feeling, believe me, I should have sought death long ere this. But it is now almost over. I have received permission to die, and the day of my death is fixed. I shall expire on the 14th of November."

I was somewhat startled at the certain tone in which he spoke, but I again attempted to reason with him on the folly of his conviction. I showed him how often the most expert medical men were at fault, and it was impossible for him to form so exact an opinion of the time of his death.

"My dear fellow," said he, "look in my face, and tell me if you ever saw a mortal whom death had marked for his own more certainly than I am."

"But what can induce you to fix the day with the certainty you do? You must surely know that the decreed hour of a man's death is known only to the Almighty himself."

"You will, perhaps, think me blasphemous or mad when I tell you I have received the notice from Heaven itself."

"My dear Mainwaring, I suspect your wish and ardent imagination have had more to do in the matter than Heaven."

"You almost make me angry," he said; "and yet, on reflection, I cannot blame you. It was in no day-dream that I received the notice, I assure you. It was a message from Heaven, as clearly and explicitly given as the words I am now uttering."

I looked at him with astonishment.

"I could easily convince you of the truth of my statement if I pleased," he continued; "but you could not believe me unless you knew my history—then you would perfectly understand all. I know you entertain for me a sincere friendship, and it is from my confidence in that friendship that I am induced to relate to you some of the prominent events of my life, if you would have the patience to listen to them. My real name you may perhaps have heard before; it is not the one I am known by here. Dr. Meadows is the only one in these parts who knows my history, and he, worthy fellow that he is, with all his unfortunate weakness, has faithfully kept the secret. Few men have been more terribly persecuted and slandered by society than I have; and yet it would be impossible for a man to be more perfectly innocent of the crime of which I was suspected—and in public opinion found guilty—than myself. I was driven from the society of my fellows, when, Heaven knows, the only connection I had with the crime of which I was suspected was one in which I acted, not only a justifiable, but an honorable part. All my relatives are now no more, and my name is only remembered when the supposed crime I was considered guilty of is mentioned. When you are sufficiently recovered to leave this place—pardon me," he interposed, noticing a look of displeasure on my face, "I did not mean to offend you; but when you again mix with the world, and you hear my name mentioned in connection with the unjust suspicion under which I have labored, if I clear up all to your satisfaction, promise me you will say some words of defence in my favor. If you will do so, I will candidly tell you all."

I readily made him the desired promise, and he immediately commenced the story of his life.

A FIRST LOVE.

I will pass rapidly over the first years of my existence. I was left an orphan at a very early age; both my parents, in fact, were dead before I had attained my fourth year. I was entitled to a small property under my father's will; it was something less than three hundred a year. My two guardians were an uncle and a grandmother. The former was a solicitor in large practice in Wiltshire; the latter resided in London, somewhere near Kennington Common, and in her immediate charge I was placed. She was a kind-hearted, amiable old lady, somewhat infirm, and of very secluded habits. With her I remained till I was nearly ten years of age; and till then I had received no education save what she had given me, as she considered I was of too delicate a constitution to be sent to school—whether she had reason on her side or no, it is impossible for me to say. My grandmother, with all her good qualities, was naturally superstitious; and two old servants, who had resided with her for many years, were even more so than their mistress. Among other theories which they attempted to instil into my childish mind, was that of guardian angels, and that they always followed and watched over us. I easily identified the one under whose especial charge I was with my mother; and my grandmother, whose love for her deceased daughter seemed to increase the older she got, willingly confirmed me in my opinion. Of all the old lady's superstitions, this is the only one I can remember, and that I loved too well easily to forget.

When I was about ten years of age, my uncle, who had been called to London on some law business, paid us

a visit. He appeared rather annoyed that my education had been so much neglected, and quite disagreed with my grandmother in respect to my delicate appearance. The result of their conversation was, that I was placed at an excellent boarding-school at Clapham; but it was agreed that I was to spend every Sunday and the holidays with my grandmother. The conclusion was no sooner arrived at than it was acted upon; and before my uncle left London, I had entered on a new phase in my existence—I was a school-boy.

The lads with whom I now associated were probably as well bred and gentlemanly as could be found in any school in London. They were principally the sons of merchants, bankers, and professional men. They were youths who were bred up in the idea that although their social position was somewhat above the average, their future prosperity and standing in the world depended entirely on their own exertions. Notwithstanding the kindness with which they received me, I felt for some time desolate indeed. I now felt the consolation of the idea my grandmother had taught me, that a guardian angel watched over me, and that mine was the spirit of my mother. This conviction of the possibility of a direct connection between the visible and invisible world has never through life entirely left me. My school-fellows attempted to joke me out of it, and in manhood, reason would often start forward and prove to me its folly; still the feeling had fast hold of me, and if at any time I succeeded in conquering it, it was sure to return to me again at some moment when I least expected it, in its full force. I will give you an example of it:

Among the divers feats of boyish daring which were practised by the scholars, was that of furtively escaping at night from the school-house and walking through Old

Clapham churchyard. We were each to go through it singly, and then wait till the whole were united at the entrance in the Wandsworth Road. The feat was the more terrible as the graveyard at that time had no lamp in it to light up the pathway. Although I possessed as much courage as the average of boys of my age, this feat was certainly at first to me a great trial of my resolution. The task, however, of walking through the graveyard, after two or three attempts became a matter of indifference to me in all respects but one. Near the back of the church, and close to the pathway, stood a stone monument enclosed with an iron railing. To whom it formerly belonged it was impossible to say. Possibly to some long-extinct city family whose country house had stood in the vicinity of the church, but who were now utterly forgotten. It was totally neglected, and had been so for many years. It was designed in bad taste, expense having evidently been mistaken by those who erected it for beauty. It had been highly ornamented and elaborately carved, but both ornaments and carving were rapidly falling into decay. All the sharper portions of the masonry had either yielded to the weather or had been destroyed. A lengthy inscription had been placed upon it; but at the time I am speaking of only a few detached words were here and there visible, and those at such long intervals apart as to render the whole unintelligible. The iron railing enclosing the monument was rapidly rusting away.

All other graves were indifferent to me; but this possessed over me a peculiar fascination. When I arrived near it, a certain attraction came over me, and I could not take my eyes from it. When I had passed it I could not help continuing to look round at it. It was not fear, but a feeling I could not account for. I felt there

was something or somebody connected with that tomb with whom I had an occult sympathy. There was no mistaking it. It was an attraction intended only for me, and no other boy felt it. It was to me as clearly a fact as if anybody had taken me by the arm and attempted to draw me to it. Often and often did I repeat the experiment, to see if I could conquer the feeling, but it increased by the attempts rather than diminished. I made many inquiries respecting that tomb, but no one appeared to know any thing about it. Frequently in the daylight I attempted to decipher the inscription, but always in vain. Even in the broad sunshine I felt the attraction as certainly, if not as forcibly, as at night.

I left school and entered on the study of the law. I arrived at manhood and went for two years abroad. When I returned, I was invited one day to dine with a friend at Clapham; I remained with him till it was too late to find a coach by which I could return to London, and I had no alternative but to walk home. As I was then living in Pimlico, my nearest road was by Vauxhall Bridge, and of course I had to pass through Old Clapham churchyard. When I entered it I was thinking deeply on some conversation which had taken place during the course of the evening. Suddenly I felt an attraction so strong come over me that it almost seemed to draw me from the path. It was the same I used to feel when a boy, and within the sphere of fascination of the mysterious tomb. I turned round and found myself beside it. A bright gas-lamp had been placed near it, and I saw it distinctly. I passed on; but the attraction was still so great that I stopped again, and determined, from curiosity, to see if I could not overcome it. I sat down on an adjoining tombstone, and gazed on the monument which had over me such extraordinary pow-

ers of fascination. By a determined concentration of the mind the impression vanished so completely that I laughed at my folly in thinking it could ever have existed. I arose to continue my journey, but no sooner had I started than the attraction was as powerful as before, and continued, though gradually decreasing in strength, till I had quitted the graveyard, when it entirely ceased.

I continued at school till I was seventeen years of age. Before I quitted it my grandmother was no more. She was not rich, having little beyond a good life-annuity to depend on; but as she was very economical in her habits she continued to save out of it, and to such an extent, that at her death I received from her an addition of two hundred a year to my income, which was placed in my uncle's hands in trust till I came of age. He was now my sole guardian. We were very good friends, although I had seen him but seldom, and I really believe he took a great interest in my welfare. He designed me for the bar. As I was too young when I left Clapham to commence immediately my legal studies in London, he proposed first to send me to a German university for two years; after that period I was to be placed in his office. I was there to remain under his eye until I had obtained my majority. I was then to be entered at one of the inns of court, and placed as a pupil with a special pleader. Although my uncle offered me no choice in the matter, these arrangements pleased me exceedingly, and in a short time I found myself a student at the university of Bonn. Here I was domiciled in the house of one of the professors, and with him I remained for the two years determined on, and I then returned home.

Within a week after my return to England I found myself established in my uncle's office at ——, in Wilt-

shire. I did not reside with him, but I boarded with a female relative of my mother's, who lived about two miles from the town. I left home for the office every morning at eight o'clock and returned about seven in the evening. There were two roads by which I could reach the office from my aunt's; one by the high-road, a trifle the longer of the two, the other across a portion of Salisbury Plain. My uncle requested me always at night to keep to the high-road, as the other was difficult to find in the dark, and he feared I might lose myself, or meet with some accident by the way, if I attempted to cross the plain. In summer, of course, I could choose the path I liked best.

The domestic arrangements of the house of business were conducted by a female relative of my uncle's. She was a highly respectable, amiable woman, a widow with an only daughter. She had formerly seen far better days, but misfortune had befallen her prior to the death of her husband, and she had thankfully accepted the offer my uncle had made to take charge of the offices. Her daughter Ellen was a girl about my own age. She was exceedingly pretty, but of very delicate appearance, and her appearance was too truthful in the tale it told. She was amiable and intelligent. A more gentle creature I believe never existed. Her mother being, as I said, very poor, Ellen had to be placed as a governess in a ladies' school. In point of ability and patience, she was admirably adapted for the task, having received from her mother an education which would have been thought excellent even in the present day, with all its greater advantages, but her health was not sufficiently strong to allow her to continue in her situation, and after the expiration of the first twelve months, she returned home to her mother.

It was then I first formed her acquaintance; we could hardly be called friends, for her mother, although always very kind to me, never allowed me to remain alone with her daughter, even for a moment. She was perhaps actuated by a feeling of delicacy on the subject. I, at that time, was considered as my uncle's heir, and Ellen's mother doubtless imagined it would be hardly honorable to allow my affections to be engaged without my uncle's sanction. It was only at dinner-time that I had a chance of seeing Ellen. I might very possibly have found an opportunity of eluding her mother's vigilance, but I was not only naturally rather timid, but moreover was possessed so strongly with the idea of female modesty that I feared a proposition to adopt any underhanded method of meeting might offend Ellen.

It would be absurd for me at my time of life to attempt to describe the intense, the respectful love I had for that dear girl. I am sure she knew it, and, more than that, I am sure she loved me. There was something in the tone of her voice which told me so. Beyond that, an indefinable sympathy you may perhaps laugh at told me she understood me, and returned my affection.

One day she did not make her appearance at table, nor was her mother in the room when I entered. My uncle was absent; and the senior clerk, who always dined with us, after waiting a short time, proposed we should commence our dinner. When we had nearly finished, we heard a man's footsteps descending the stairs, and immediately afterwards Ellen's mother entered the room and seated herself at the table. Her eyes were red and inflamed, and she had evidently been weeping bitterly. After a few moments' pause, I ventured to ask after Ellen. Her mother attempted to answer me, but

could not succeed. After a vain attempt to speak, she rose from her seat and hurriedly left the room. We inquired of the servant, who immediately afterwards entered, the cause of her mistress's distress; she told us that an hour before Ellen had broken a blood-vessel, and was then in great danger, although the bleeding had already stopped.

At first I hardly realized my misfortune. The probable fatal result was too terrible an event for me to believe in, but in a short time the sad truth became but too apparent. A few days afterwards the senior clerk told me there would be no possibility of a recovery—that, in fact, Ellen had been for some time past in a consumption. During the remainder of that day I was perfectly useless at the office. Continually I left it to inquire of the servant-girl what intelligence there was from the sick-room. At last the girl, probably to please me, said she thought her mistress was better, and would in the end recover; upon which frail proof I went that evening to my home somewhat consoled at the probability that all might yet end well.

I hoped against hope. In my walk home I endeavored to bring to my mind whatever analogous cases I had heard of that had recovered. They were few, lamentably few, in proportion to those which had terminated fatally. Even those which did recover could hardly be termed similar cases to Ellen's; perhaps not one perfectly parallel case could I find.

Every morning on arriving at the office I inquired of the servant-girl after the health of her young mistress, and as regularly received for an answer that she was better. There had not been the slightest recurrence of the bleeding, but still, she admitted, Miss Ellen's mother seemed dreadfully anxious about her.

Oh, how I longed to see Ellen! but the doctor had ordered her to be kept perfectly quiet and to be allowed to speak to no one. Day after day, however, the intelligence continued favorable, and my spirits rose in proportion—so easily are we induced to believe in a result we hope for.

The behavior of Ellen's mother was incomprehensible to me. Although she was fully aware of the progress her daughter's health was making, she still continued extremely low-spirited. Another singular feature in her demeanor was her altered behavior towards me. Although she had uniformly been kind to me, she had always been reserved and distant when in my society, but since Ellen's misfortune she had treated me with as much affection as if I had been her own son.

For some time past my duties at the office had been performed in a faultless manner, and my uncle was well satisfied with my conduct, with the exception of perhaps too frequently leaving my desk to ask for the news from the sick-room. Day after day succeeded, and the bulletin continued favorable, with the exception of the great difficulty the invalid experienced in recovering her strength.

At last she was sufficiently restored not only to sit up, but to leave her room for an hour or two daily; and a few days afterwards I was permitted to see her, but with an express prohibition against any conversation taking place. When I entered the room, Ellen sat reclining in an easy-chair. She was changed—much changed. Not a particle of color, save a light blue tinge under the eye, was to be seen, and that was so faint as to be hardly perceptible; her lips, too, had lost their color, but her large mild blue eye had acquired more of the hue of heaven than it had possessed when

she was in health. She smiled when she saw me enter, but said nothing; speech of any kind had been, as I have already said, strictly prohibited to us both. The look she gave me as I entered, momentary as it was, and since which many long years have passed, is as fresh now in my memory as it was the moment after I saw her. It went to my heart, and has since rested there. She placed out her hand for me to take—it was the color almost of marble, even the blue veins in it were scarcely perceptible. Beautifully white as it was, it was hot and feverish, and I distinctly felt the arteries throb when I pressed it. I sat down by her side, and gazed on her face for a few moments. Her sweet smile gradually vanished; she looked at me pityingly for a moment, and then turned her face with sorrow marked on it towards her mother. The poor woman rose, and, touching me on the arm, beckoned to me to leave the room with her. I followed her mechanically, and when outside the door, the reason of her conduct became apparent, for I found my face was covered with tears, which had poured down my cheeks unrestrainedly.

"You had better not remain longer now," said her mother, affecting not to notice my sorrow, but with much kindness of manner. "You can see Ellen again to-morrow, but we must not fatigue her too much at once."

The next day, and for several succeeding days, I saw her for a few minutes at a time; but hope became powerless against the sad truth which was hourly becoming more apparent. "I watched her withering leaf by leaf." At last it was considered desirable she should not leave her room, and I did not see her for a fortnight.

One day, as I was leaving the office, the maid-servant

whispered to me that her mistress wished to speak to me. I followed her up stairs, and found Ellen's mother standing outside the bed-room door. "Come in," she said; "but you may only stay a moment." I entered, and found Ellen sitting up in bed, supported by pillows. A slight flush, with clearly-defined edges, was on her cheeks; otherwise she was deadly pale. She cast on me, as I approached, a glance so fond, so pure, so mild, that there appeared more of the angel than the mortal in it. I took her hand, but could not speak. Her lips moved, but the words did not leave them, or if they did, they were too faint for me to hear. I approached my head nearer to her to catch, if possible, her meaning. "Do not forget me," she at last uttered; "think of me sometimes." I could not answer her; my heart was too full, and my sobs proved it. I was allowed to remain but a few moments longer, and I never saw her again. The next day she was no more.

Absurd as my love must now appear in such a sorrow-beaten man as I am, all then pitied me. The clerks in an attorney's office are rarely very sympathetic, but these showed me the greatest kindness. They did not attempt to console me; they paid no attention to my inability to perform the duties of the office, but quietly did them for me. I was not at the funeral; on the contrary, my uncle desired me not to come to the office on that day. I should certainly have been present in spite of any prohibition or impediment, but she was buried in Gloucestershire, in a village church-yard where her father and only brother were interred.

Weeks passed, and although the first fresh burst of my grief had somewhat subsided, my love for Ellen continued as pure and ardent as ever. The road across the plain was now my favorite walk home, as I used to

meet with nothing on the road, and I could, uninterruptedly, think of her I had lost. Those solitary walks were a source of great consolation to me. I somehow had contrived to divide my attention so as to allow myself to perform my official duties in a proper and professional manner, and reserve my thoughts of Ellen when I could indulge in them unrestrainedly in the evening.

One night when I was strolling leisurely along, my thoughts as usual fixed on Ellen, I raised my eyes to heaven and almost prayed to her. The night was misty, but the fog hung closely on the plain, so, although I could see but little around me, the stars were plainly discernible in the sky. I thought that she whom I had lost now dwelt above them, and I wondered whether she could in spirit visit the earth. Could I have been certain of it, how happy it would have made me!

Suddenly I was aware that some one was beside me. No sound informed me of it, nor had I seen any thing to induce me to think it, but with a certainty not less than the certainty of my own existence, I became conscious that some one was by my side, and was advancing with me. Slowly my eyes quitted their gaze on the heavens and became fixed on the mist before me. I felt no fear, but an indescribable solemn sensation. I was not afraid to discover whom it might be, but I looked towards my side without turning my head; still nothing was to be seen, though I knew that a being was there. I walked slowly along, and the invisible accompanied me. The feeling of surprise vanished, and a delightful sensation of happiness supplied its place. I was certain, I knew not how, that Ellen was by my side. Presently a sympathetic, or what might have been termed a mute conversation passed between us, if such an expression

might be used. Though no word was uttered, there was an inexplicable current of intelligence perfectly understood by us both. So complete was it that it might have been written out. On my part, I told her how fondly I loved her, how intensely I had suffered from her loss, and how inconsolable I was. She, with the pure spirit of an angel, answered me. She comforted my affliction. She poured oil and wine on my wounded heart. A feeling of bliss, second only to Paradise, came over me, and my happiness increased as the time passed on. At last earth became for a moment too strong within me. I was not content with the mute happiness I enjoyed, but exclaimed aloud, "Ellen, dear Ellen, do speak to me!"

In a moment the spell was broken, and I was alone on the bleak plain. Both mentally and verbally I prayed her to return, but nothing was near me but the cold raw mist. I stood patiently for more than an hour, hoping she would return—it was useless—that evening we met no more. Sadly I resumed my journey homeward, determining in my mind that no rash impulse should break the happiness of my next evening's walk.

I slept little that night, and I rose early the next morning. On arriving at the office, the other clerks noticed my pale, haggard appearance, and asked if I was unwell. My uncle also remarked it, and ordered me almost peremptorily to go home. I had some difficulty in persuading him to allow me to remain, for he took great interest in me. At last I succeeded. It would indeed have been a terrible punishment for me to have missed my evening's walk across the plain.

Night at last came on, and I started on my journey. I walked rapidly to the spot where I had met Ellen the evening before; indeed, so completely was I out of

breath from the rapidity of my pace, that I should have been obliged to have rested there out of sheer exhaustion. Long, long I waited. The night was clear and starlight, and the cool air soon recovered me, but with my strength my anxiety increased. Still Ellen came not. I must have waited there for some hours before I commenced my walk homewards. Indeed, it was so late when I arrived at the house, that I was severely reprimanded by my aunt for what she insisted was contrary to the regular habits of her house, but I really believe the good lady's remonstrances were caused by the fatigued appearance I presented. I had, in fact, fallen off considerably both in health and strength since Ellen's decease.

The next evening I again attempted to meet her, but without success. Night after night passed, still she came not. The effects of my frequent disappointments acted so prejudicially on my health, that my uncle told me that he had determined on placing me, till I was of age, in the office of his agent in London. I assured him that my indisposition was but trifling, and that I should soon be better; but he would hear of no alternative. He expressed great affection for me. He assured me that the love he bore me alone induced him to come to the resolution he had taken, and that nothing I could say could induce him to alter it. As soon as there was a vacancy in the office in London, I should leave Wiltshire. There was no use on my part arguing the matter longer, so I offered no further objection; but I felt so miserable that a sentence of death could hardly have made me more so.

Oh, how wretched did I feel that evening when starting on my road home! I had for some time past given up all hope of again meeting Ellen. My pace was slow,

for my strength had lately fallen off considerably, and I strolled quietly along. My thoughts, as usual, were fixed on her I had lost, and the utter hopelessness of my position weighed on my spirits so oppressively that at last I exclaimed, my eyes turned to heaven, and the tears streaming down my face, "Ellen, dear Ellen, do pity me!"

The last word had hardly escaped my lips when Ellen was at my side. I did not turn my eyes towards her, for I knew she was invisible. It is impossible to express the sensation of joy I felt when I found she was near me. My happiness was unbounded. We continued our walk side by side, our sympathetic conversation continuing the whole of the time. Oh, how encouraging, how consoling, were the expressions of love she gave me! She knew my sorrows, and pitied them, and promised with her angel power she would help me to support them. We parted; but, oh, how differently from the former time! When we had approached sufficiently near to the house to distinguish the lights in the dining-room window, her presence seemed less perfect. It then appeared gradually to melt away, and she was totally lost to me some time before I reached home.

I was happier that night than I had been for months, and the next morning my aunt noticed with pleasure my altered appearance. The next day at the office my fellow-clerks complimented me on the visible change for the better in my health. That day at the office my duties were cheerfully and rapidly performed. In the evening Ellen again met me, and she continued to do so for several consecutive nights. Both my health and spirits began rapidly to improve. Her visits afterwards became less frequent, perhaps two or three nights in a week, but on each visit the same unbounded happiness

attended me. It was some months before there was a vacancy in the agent's office in London. When the time arrived for me to leave, I had not met Ellen for nearly a week. As I had improved in health and spirits, her visits had become gradually rarer; not from any want of sympathy for me, I am persuaded, but gently to lessen my intense attachment for her, and thus enable me to follow without impediment the path in life which had been marked out for me.

CHAPTER V.

MAINWARING'S CONFESSION—CONTINUED.

After I quitted my uncle I remained in the office of his agent, a solicitor of high standing in London, till I came of age. Nothing more remained of my attachment for Ellen but a holy sort of love and veneration, such as a man might bear towards an angel. There was nothing of earth about it. It was profound and immovable; yet it did not belong to this world, nor interfere in any manner with any occupation or designs which for the time occupied my thoughts. When I had attained my majority, my uncle came up to London to give an account of his stewardship. Certainly the conduct of no guardian could have been more honorable towards a ward than his had been to me. The income he placed at my disposal was, thanks to his economy and the judicious investments he made of my property, far greater than I had dreamed of. I followed the course he proposed, and entered as a student at the Inner Temple, and at the same time commencing the more abstruse studies of the law under the tuition of an eminent special pleader.

I will not detain you with any lengthened description of my noviciate. I studied moderately, and amused myself greatly. The different vacations I generally spent abroad. I contrived—what, by the by, was no difficult matter for a young man with a good income to

accomplish—to obtain a tolerably wide circle of acquaintances, and was, I believe, a favorite in whatever society I mingled with.

I was called to the bar. For some time afterwards I I had but little practice—few barristers of my age had—but I was far from being as destitute of solicitors' patronage as many of far greater experience and ability than myself. Nothing occurred worthy of relating to you till I was about eight-and-twenty years of age, when I fell desperately in love with a lady whom I had met at an evening party at the house of one of the judges. She was a widow, of some five-and-twenty years of age, with one child °(posthumous),° nearly two years old. There was something to me particularly attractive in her appearance; she was tall; pale, though not of a very fair complexion; with dark hair, and particularly large, soft eyes of a deep blue; her teeth were white as pearls, and her mouth beautifully formed. Her face was not only lovely, but there was a singular, unusual expression about it, impossible clearly to describe. Though at first sight it was the countenance of an exceedingly placid temper, yet there was a profundity about it which told of an originality of thought rarely met with; yet in her conversation there was nothing eccentric or different from that of ladies in good society. She was mild and sedate in her manner, her voice was gentle, and the general impression she made was that of extreme amiability; yet I thought I could discover symptoms of a hidden fire, an extraordinary originality of character, which had for me a peculiar fascination. Her husband, an officer in the army, had been killed in India. After his death she remained at Calcutta till the birth of her child, and she then returned in company with a female relative to England. Her income, which was not large,

was still sufficient to allow her to live in a good position in society.

I had some difficulty in getting more particularly introduced to her. I had no friends who were personally acquainted with her, and I was not sufficiently intimate with the judge's family to ask for a more positive introduction. The same fortune, however, which generally favors lovers favored me. I discovered at last a friend who was intimate with her. He took me to her house, and an intimacy commenced with her, which at last ended in my making her an offer of marriage, which was accepted. It would be absurd to compare the love I had for Clara Macgregor with that I bore for Ellen. I admired Clara to an extent I had never before felt for any woman. I fancied myself in love, but it was the passionate desire to obtain the object of my intense admiration which actuated me, rather than any other feeling. Again, I cannot say that she appeared to have any extraordinary affection for me. Indeed, I never heard her express great admiration for any thing; still, as I said before, there was evidently a latent fire of immense strength which might on occasion be developed, but what event or feeling would be likely to elicit it, no human being could form an opinion.

If Clara was apathetical, she by no means lacked ability. In conversation, occasionally she was particularly brilliant. It would be impossible for me to overstate the pride I have felt when I found a whole roomful of company hushed to listen to the wit and intelligence of her remarks. One subject alone I remarked in her which gave me any uneasiness, and that was the little affection which she appeared to entertain for her child. Although it was now sufficiently old to show the first beautiful dawnings of intelligence, although the boy in

point of beauty was a true child of its mother's, although Clara poured on it every endearment and caress which a mother can make use of when it was brought into her presence, there was evidently no genuine affection; not one spark of that charming expression which is natural to the mother's face on such occasions ever illumined Clara's, and when the nurse took the boy from her, I could not divest myself of the impression that its absence was a relief to her.

The day for the wedding drew nigh, and as it approached, the beauty of Clara seemed to increase, and my admiration for her kept pace with it. I made her many very handsome presents of jewelry, all of which she accepted with much pleasure of tone and manner, and she took every opportunity of wearing them, still the same apathy seemed to hang upon her. Often when I reflected upon the subject, I tried to attribute my opinion to the extreme intensity of my own admiration for her, which made Clara's enthusiasm appear dull in comparison, but I hardly succeeded to the extent I could have wished.

The wedding-day at last arrived, and as soon as Clara was mine we started off for a tour on the Continent, where we remained some months, and then returned to England. I took a house a few miles from town, purposing again to take up my profession, which latterly I had much neglected.

How can I describe Clara as a wife? She was amiable, kind, and attentive. That she loved me fondly I have no doubt, nay, more, she was exceedingly jealous of me, and that of itself is a proof of love. I never saw her really out of humor, her behavior was as placid as it was possible for a human creature's to be. Still I should have liked better a little more energy of character. But with all her placidity, I felt, as I before stated,

there was some occult terrible fire in her which was as yet unknown to me. To her child she showed, when it was in her presence, the greatest affection, and she appeared delighted as its tongue formed each new word. Yet that terrible indifference, that absence of genuine maternal feeling, seemed still to pervade her.

"We had been married nearly a year, and Clara was again soon expecting to be a mother," when a circumstance occurred which not only surprised me, but terrified me as well. Her child slept in a room beside ours. It was not only entered from our bed-room, but it opened also on the landing-place at the head of the stairs. I had remained up writing till it was considerably past midnight. Clara had retired to rest early, as she felt somewhat indisposed. When I had finished the letters I had been writing, I lighted a taper, and having extinguished the gas, was on the point of leaving my study when the taper, which had been imperfectly fixed in the candlestick, fell out upon the ground, and I was left in total darkness. I crept as cautiously and as noiselessly up stairs as I could, finding my way with some difficulty. When I arrived at the top of the stairs, I perceived there was a light in the child's room, and the door was open. I looked in and found Clara, who had on a dressing-gown, with a candle in her hand, standing by the child's cot, gazing on him as he lay asleep. I was struck motionless with amazement. Could that be the face of my beautiful wife? Yes, it was hers, yet never did I witness a more demoniacal expression of countenance. It was the wild hatred of a fiend, more than the expression of a woman. Her eye, naturally large, was dilated to an unearthly size. Her lips were compressed. Her breathing was short, and her whole manner betrayed the most intense hatred.

In a moment I recovered myself and entered the room. So absorbed was she in her thoughts that she did not notice me till I put my arm gently round her waist. "Clara, my dear," I said, softly, "are you dreaming?" She started, and tried to collect her senses, but could not. I took the candle from her hand and led her unresistingly into our bed-room. There even she could not recover herself, but remained seated for nearly an hour in an easy-chair before I could recall her senses sufficiently to get her to bed.

The next morning she seemed utterly unconscious of any thing extraordinary having passed. She was perhaps a trifle paler, nothing more. I did not like to refer to the circumstance, yet I wished for some explanation. At last I asked her if she had slept well. She answered me, that the evening before, she had felt much fatigued, and that it was perhaps half an hour before she went to sleep, but afterwards she rested well, and did not wake till morning. As she had been in bed at least four hours before I came up stairs, I became convinced she must have been in a state of somnambulism, so I made no further remark to her on the subject, but resolved to watch her narrowly for the future. At the same time, the whole circumstance caused me the greatest uneasiness, the more so, from the terrible expression I had witnessed on her face the evening before—an expression which I could not have believed it capable of wearing under any imaginable combination of circumstances.

I now watched Clara narrowly for some days. The result, I am sorry to say, was far from satisfactory, although it led to no certain conclusion. Whether she was innately aware of my suspicions, or whether she had determined on destroying any unfavorable impression her behavior might have fixed upon my mind, I

cannot say, but she now treated her child with such marked and ostentatious proofs of affection that I greatly doubted their being genuine. Although she always manifested this tenderness for him when I happened to be in the room with her, or was expected, I more than once saw her with him when she was not aware that I was near, and on these occasions her conduct to him was as indifferent as it was affectionate when she knew I was present.

I now inquired in an indirect way of those who had known her during the lifetime of her first husband, whether any occurrence had taken place, whether any episode in the history of her life had, or could have, influenced her affection for her child: I could hear of none whatever, unless it was the terrible alarm she had experienced in a mutiny of the natives when her husband met his death. This appeared to me, at first sight, as rather tending to increase her affection for her child than otherwise; still I could not help admitting that one of those obscure morbid mental actions which puzzle psychologists so much, might have arisen from it, and was now, in her present susceptible phase of existence, exercising an undue influence over her. I therefore determined to watch her narrowly till after her confinement, and then I hoped the unhappy feeling might pass over.

Nothing particular occurred till her confinement. The same untrue affection had continued to be shown to her child in my presence. Still she contrived to impress the servants and all around her with the idea that she was passionately fond of it, and that her love for it increased daily. Once I heard a housemaid speaking of her mistress's affection for her child in terms of great admiration, and hoping the one expected would be as well loved.

Clara's confinement came on, and a long and dangerous one it was. At last she presented me with a daughter. The mother and child progressed slowly for a fortnight, when a sudden malady attacked the infant and it died. I was dreadfully affected at its death, and Clara still more so. There was no acting, no false coloring in her affliction. She felt, and felt keenly, and my affection for her increased with her sorrow.

The child was buried, and Clara herself remained on the brink of the tomb for nearly a month. Fearful indeed had been the effect of her loss on her constitution. A change then came over her, and she slowly began to gain strength, and three months after the death of her child, she had attained a state of delicate convalescence.

The only circumstances now connected with her which gave me any annoyance, were the excessive attention and caresses she lavished on little George, which, as I doubted their genuineness, irritated me exceedingly. I on more than one occasion spoke of her over-indulgence, and once I was obliged to order the nurse to take him from the room. Clara expressed herself as highly indignant at my behavior, and continued out of temper for several days. This was the more remarkable, as she was generally of a most equable temperament. At last it passed off, and nothing occurred for the next two months to cloud our happiness; but then Clara was seized with a low fever, which threw her on a bed of sickness. The fever ran through its customary stages, and she again began to improve in health. Her physician advised that as soon as she was strong enough to be removed, we should leave England and spend the winter in Italy, as he considered change of scene and climate would do far more to re-establish her constitution after

the severe shocks it had received, than all the care and attention which could be given her in England. I willingly encouraged the idea, and all our arrangements were speedily determined on. Our party was to consist only of my wife, myself, little George, and his nursemaid, and the courier. My wife appeared delighted at the idea of her son accompanying us; but the same terrible thought came over me that her joy was feigned, and a circumstance shortly afterwards occurred which proved that my suspicions were just.

During the whole of Clara's illness I had occupied a separate room. It was situated on the same floor, and was separated from my wife's by the small room in which George slept. These rooms occupied the whole frontage of the house, and communicated with each other by two doors which opened on George's little room. One night, about a week before we were to start for Italy, Clara had been particularly occupied with her son. She had lavished on him every possible caress; and when his nurse came to take him from her to put him to bed, she almost smothered him with kisses. Still there appeared to me the same actress-like effect which always appeared when she was occupied with him, and which had increased on her since I had found her standing by his bedside in so singular a mood. My wife retired that night to bed at a very early hour; but I, having some law papers to look over, did not seek my room till it was considerably past midnight. Thinking still on the subject on which I had been occupied during the evening, I slept but lightly. A turret clock was over our stables, and I heard it strike the hours of one and two. Another cause contributed to render my slumbers still more uncertain: some alteration had to be made in the window-curtains of my room, and they were not

completed before the household retired to rest, so the strong beams of the moon poured their scarcely-diminished light through the muslin blinds which alone were on the window.

I now fell asleep, but was again disturbed by the clock, which struck the hour of three. I was hardly awake when I thought I heard a sort of stifled cry in George's room. I started up in bed and listened. There was no cry, but an extraordinary subdued noise, as if some one were pressing his bed with great force against the wall. Suddenly the child uttered one piercing shriek, and the movement of his bed became more violent. In an instant I leaped upon the floor and rushed into the child's room. I there witnessed a sight which, for a moment, and but for a moment, completely paralyzed me. By the clear light of the moon I perceived my wife in her white night-dress leaning over the bed of the child. She was with one hand pressing heavily the pillow on its mouth, while with the other she firmly grasped his throat, the limbs of the poor child the while struggling fearfully. In a moment I seized Clara round the waist, and tore her, though with great difficulty, from the boy. She struggled violently; and all the force I was master of was hardly sufficient to effect my purpose. When I had fairly removed her from the bed and she found I was the stronger of the two, she turned upon me and lacerated my face with her nails. I removed her into her own room, she struggling with all her might the while; and I succeeded only through despair lending me strength, so violent was her resistance.

When I had fairly got her into her own room, the night-light she always burnt allowed me to see her face. The change in her features was truly horrible. The beautiful, mild look for which she was so celebrated,

was changed into an expression far more like that of a tigress than a human being. Her eyes glared at me with concentrated rage. I with great difficulty thrust her into an easy-chair, and held her hands tightly in my own.

In the mean time, the poor child, having recovered from his stupefied terror, set up a cry so piercing that it could be heard all over the house. "For God's sake, Clara, calm yourself!" I said; "the servants will be aroused, and in what a situation will they find you!" I had hardly uttered the words when I heard the nurse's bed-room door open, and immediately afterwards her footsteps could be distinguished on the stairs. I hastily threw over me a dressing-gown of my wife's, and lighting a candle by the night-lamp, went to meet the girl. She was much attached to George; and when she entered the room she rushed direct to his bed, clasped him in her arms, and tried to soothe his terrors. I left them, and returned to my wife. She had subsided into a comatose state; her eyes were open, but she saw not, and gave but little signs of life.

By this time the other servants were aroused, and I requested a footman to run for the aid of a medical man who resided in the neighborhood. I then left my wife in charge of one of the female servants, and returned to my own room to put on my own dressing gown. When I took off my wife's, I found it stained with blood. I then caught sight of my face in the looking-glass, and found the blood trickling down from the violence of Clara's attack upon me. I attempted for a moment to stop the bleeding, but my efforts were in vain, and I was obliged to let it take its course, as I was wanted in my wife's room. As I passed through George's, the nurse, who was recovering from her first surprise, asked me

the reason of the child's terror. I was for the moment utterly at a loss for an answer; but after a few moments' reflection, I replied, that I supposed he must have had some dream which had frightened him. That by his cry he had awakened both his mother and myself, and we had rushed simultaneously into his room, when my wife was so overcome by the alarm that she fainted away. The girl appeared somewhat puzzled at the explanation, but she said nothing.

The doctor at last arrived. The nurse and myself had contrived to get Clara into bed before his arrival, but she still remained in the same unconscious state. The doctor remained with her all night. The next morning symptoms of a reaction came on, but very slowly. About eight o'clock he was obliged to leave us, having to see another patient. Before he quitted the house the nursemaid called his attention to little George. Not only was his mouth swollen as if by a blow, but there appeared blue marks as of fingers on each side of his throat. The doctor looked at me for an explanation, but I told him I could give him none; what tale to invent I did not know. I noticed the nurse the while looking attentively at the marks Clara's violence had left on my face. The girl evidently suspected something, but I anxiously avoided any conversation with her. The doctor, after promising to send a lotion for the child's face, left us. I again entered Clara's bed-room, and found her rapidly recovering the use of her senses. When she saw me, the glance she gave me was exceedingly singular. Her face was half-buried in her pillow, so as easily to avert her eyes from me; but she watched me with the furtive glance of some wild animal—perfectly quiet and subdued, but terrified. I spoke to her kindly, but she would not answer me. On the contrary, she turned

her face more round upon her pillow, so as to avert her eyes entirely from me.

I turned from the bed and found the nurse and housemaid exchanging most significant glances, but with what intent I could not divine. Afterwards I heard them questioning George, who was a remarkably intelligent child, but he could give them no description of what had taken place. It seemed to have left the effect upon the poor child of a terrible dream. So far I was pleased, as the affair now rested between my wife and myself. Still I was aware there was a most unpleasant effect remaining in the minds of the servants, which greatly annoyed me; but what caused me yet greater pain was the reserved and distant manner towards me of the medical man who was called in to attend my wife. He evidently imagined that great violence had been used towards the child, and I for some days trembled lest he should bring the affair under the notice of the police authorities, but fortunately, if he ever conceived the intention, he did not carry it out.

I now had to resolve on my future plan of action. To allow George to remain in the custody of his mother was impossible; to give to the world my reason for removing him was almost equally so. Still, something was to be decided on. At last I resolved to place him under the care of a very respectable widow who kept a small, select, preparatory school in the neighborhood. I gave out as an excuse that my wife's health was too delicate to allow her to support the fatigue and anxiety of the child during our sojourn in Italy. Much as I wished my statement to be believed, although I expressed myself as naturally as possible, I could not avoid noticing the cool, doubting manner in which my statements were received. Although it would now be nearly a fortnight

before we could leave England, in consequence of fresh arrangements to be made, I resolved that George should leave the house at once, to accustom him and his mother, as I pretended, to a gradual separation.

Clara appeared to grieve greatly at the idea of being parted from her son, and contrived with all the cunning of a monomaniac to make others believe her grief was genuine. With me her behavior was very different. She at first appeared, when no others were present, cowed and degraded in my society, although she had presence of mind enough to conceal it in the company of others. Afterwards, when we were alone, she appeared more composed and amiable, as if she wished to cancel from my memory, by her altered behavior, the terrible shock I had received. Occasionally she would burst into a torrent of tears, and then throwing her arms around my neck, beseech me to have the same affection for her I formerly possessed. She went rarely to see George, and when she did so, I was always in her company. She continued, however, I found, for it always occurred in my absence, to express the most intense affection for her son, and to deplore my resolution to place him at the school, and prohibit her from taking him with us to Italy.

As the time for our departure drew near, Clara got more depressed. She begged me in the most earnest manner, and unfortunately in the presence of the servants, to be allowed to take her son with us; but much as I wished to oblige her, I could not conceal from myself the idea that her wish was feigned, or if genuine, the terrible morbid desire for her son's destruction might again come over her. Clara at last gave such sway to her feelings, real or false, that I was more than ever determined to refuse her. She then flew into a

violent passion, and upbraided me before others for my cruelty. I would willingly have given way, but I had a duty to perform, and I was determined to go through with it.

One morning as I was on the point of leaving home, she accosted me, and in a serious tone of voice inquired if I intended still to be obdurate with her. I attempted for some time to reason with her, but finding all my arguments useless, I left the room. She followed me to the head of the stairs, and then said with much solemnity of manner:

"This is the last time I will ask you, remember—Will you allow my child to go with me?"

"Clara," I replied, "you know the reason of my refusing you perfectly well. Much as it pains me, I cannot allow it."

"I will never ask you again," she answered, and immediately returned to her room.

I dined that day in town. It was fully eleven o'clock before I reached home, having spent in the evening some hours with a friend. During the day I had frequently thought over my morning conversation with Clara. I still determined to keep to my resolution, but I resolved to reason with her again on the propriety of my conduct. It took me no little anxiety to frame the arguments I intended to bring forward, in such a manner as not to hurt her feelings—to treat her with every possible kindness, and show that it was my love to her and her child, which led me to adopt the course I had taken.

When I arrived at the house my first step was to see Clara. Finding she was not in the drawing-room, I immediately went to her bed-room, but found the door locked. I knocked several times, but received no answer.

Imagining she might have fallen asleep, I determined not to disturb her, but wait till the morrow. On inquiring of her maid whether her mistress was indisposed, I received for answer, "that she did not seem more so than usual. That she had appeared very low-spirited during the morning, but in the afternoon she had rallied, and left the house for more than an hour. That she had retired to rest about nine o'clock, after having said she should require nothing more that evening." This information confirmed me in my resolution to postpone my interview with Clara, and I retired to bed.

The next morning, as soon as I was dressed, I went to Clara's room. The door was still locked; I knocked at it, but received no answer. Thinking she might perhaps be asleep, I determined I would not disturb her till after I had breakfasted. When I had finished, I again went to her room and knocked at the door, but I received no answer. I repeated the knocking, each time louder than the former, and I called her by her name; but still the same silence. I was now convinced her behavior arose from ill-humor. Although I was very angry, I wished to avoid a scene, and I went down stairs to my study. I waited till it was noon, and I then rang for Clara's maid and inquired of her if she had seen her mistress.

"No, sir, I have twice knocked at her door, but got no answer."

"Go again," I said, "and knock louder, and do not come down again till you have received one."

The girl left me, and I heard her knock at Clara's door; again and again she repeated it, but without receiving any answer. Now thoroughly alarmed, I joined the girl, and we knocked and called so loudly, it would

have been impossible for Clara not to have heard us; but all remained still in the room. The girl's countenance showed her terror, and mine must have shown still more if it expressed but half what I felt. At last I determined on making one more effort. Shaking the handle of the door violently, I exclaimed at the top of my voice, "Clara, if you do not immediately open the door, I will send for a locksmith."

We waited anxiously for a reply, but not a sound answered us. By this time the other servants had joined us, and were waiting the result in breathless expectation. "William," I said to the footman, assuming a calm I did not feel, "go for a locksmith, and tell him to bring with him his tools to open the door. Go as quickly as you can, and bring him back with you." The man immediately left us. I was now so agitated that I found it impossible to maintain the calm I had assumed in the presence of the servants, and I went below into my study and threw myself into a chair. I felt some terrible misfortune was hanging over me, but of what sort or to what extent I could not discern. In this state of terror I remained perhaps half an hour, each succeeding moment appearing longer than the last.

At last the footman returned with the locksmith, and we mounted the stairs together. After some little delay, the door was forced open, and we all rushed into the room and approached the bed. The first glance told all—Clara was a corpse. Her eyes were nearly closed, and there was the unmistakable pallid hue of death on her countenance. Her head reposed naturally on her pillow. One arm was stretched on the counterpane by her side, the other had fallen from the bed and pointed to the ground. Beside the bed and immediately beneath her hand was a broken tumbler.

All were silent. I was so completely stunned that I was incapable of uttering a word, although I perfectly understood all I saw. The footman had already left the room for the doctor, while the rest gathered round the bed, and, with astonishment and awe on their countenances, gazed at my dead wife. Still I spoke not, although I wished to speak. Suddenly I threw myself on my knees and attempted to pray—it was useless. I placed my face in my hands and remained in that position till I was aroused from my stupor by the doctor entering the room. In a moment he understood all. "She has been poisoned," he said to me, for I had risen from my knees. "Where is the vial I sent last night? Look for it; I shall easily know it by the label on it."

He took up the broken tumbler and smelt it. "There has been laudanum in this, and it never came from my house. Who gave it to her?" he continued, looking suspiciously at me. "The vial must be found, and immediately, too." After looking for a few moments round the room, the nursemaid found it on a chest of drawers. It had not been opened, but still remained with the paper wrapper on it.

"You had better inform the police of this," said the doctor to the footman. "A coroner's inquest should be called immediately. I can do nothing; she has been dead for hours."

All this time I had remained silent. I felt the suspicion of a most terrible crime was rising in the minds of those present against me, but I could not recover from my stupor. I could not even weep. My poor wife lay there a corpse, and I knew it. I fully felt my loss, still not a tear was in my eye. At last the doctor said to me:

"I cannot leave this room, sir, till this affair is placed in the hands of the police."

"Had you not better close her eyes, sir?" said one of the servants to him in an undertone.

"No, it is better to leave every thing as it is till the police have seen the room."

In a short time the footman returned with the inspector of police, who immediately commenced an examination of the rooms.

"Where does this door lead to?" he inquired, pointing to the one which opened into the dressing-room.

The nurse informed him.

"Is it locked?"

"It is, sir."

"By whom was it locked—by your mistress?"

"No, sir, my master locked it about a week ago, when Master George was frightened one night, and it has never been opened since."

I began now somewhat to recover from my stupor. The girl had stated the truth. I had fastened the door to prevent Clara from entering the child's room, and had locked up the key, but I had quite forgotten the circumstance.

"Where is the key of the door?" inquired the inspector.

"Master has it, I suppose," said the girl.

This completely recovered me. I replied I had forgotten where I placed the key, but I had no doubt I should soon find it. I remarked at the same time a curious look of intelligence pass between those in the room.

"What do you know of the affair, sir?" the inspector inquired of the doctor.

"Nothing more than that I found her quite dead, and

she had been so for hours, and that the broken tumbler had contained laudanum."

"When did you see her last alive?"

"She called on me yesterday afternoon, to ask me to give her something to revive her spirits, as she said she was in a very low state. She appeared to have been crying bitterly."

"I will not ask you any questions, sir," said the inspector, "but you can make any remarks you please. In the first place, I must trouble you for the key of this door."

I made no answer, but left the room, he following me. I went into my own room, he still keeping close to me. With some little difficulty I found the key. I had locked it up in my dressing-room. The subject had, as I said before, totally escaped my memory. I knew that the door was locked, for I had tried it the evening before, but I thought it had been done by Clara. The inspector took the key from me without saying a word, and left the room. Clara's room was then cleared. She was to remain in the position she was in till the coroner's inquest. The inspector told me I could see her when I pleased, but only in the presence of a policeman he should leave on the premises.

"There is so much here, sir," said he, "I cannot understand, that I should not be doing my duty if I did not use all possible precaution."

An inquest was held the next day, and to my utter horror I could perceive there was a latent suspicion in the minds of the witnesses that I had murdered my wife. The whole of the circumstances, as far as the servants and doctor knew, respecting George's alarm in the night, were brought forward. The marks on his throat were spoken of, as well as those which had been

visible on his face. The fact of my refusing to allow the child to accompany my wife in her journey to Italy was also mentioned, as well as her bitter grief at my determination to leave him behind us. They all spoke of Clara as an excellent and fondly-attached mother, who appeared to dote on her child. The fact of the dressing-room door being locked and the key in my possession, was also commented on. The doctor also mentioned the fact of my wife having called on him the day before her death, in great trouble, and asked his advice for her lowness of spirits; and the vial containing the draught he had prescribed was produced. No clue could be obtained in what manner she had procured the poison. Several other incidents were also spoken of, all tending against me.

The coroner summed up, and the jury, after deliberating for some hours, returned an open verdict, "That the deceased died from the effects of taking laudanum; but in what manner obtained, or by whom administered, there was no evidence to show."

This was tantamount, I felt, to a verdict of murder against me, and all seemed to consider it almost in that light. I looked around me as soon as the jury had given it, and remarked the defiant glances of all present directed against me. Strong in my own innocence, I attempted to return their defiance, but still I felt through my sorrow most deeply the unjust suspicion which hung over me.

I had now to make preparations for the funeral. I sent for an undertaker, and told him to arrange every thing. Even the usual execrable glibness of his craft was wanting in the man, and though he took the order, his reserved, cold manner showed that he also considered me as a murderer. I found, also, that the house was watched

by the police; and an inquiry, I was told, would soon be set on foot for the purpose of throwing some light on the matter. I had written to an aunt of Clara's, informing her of the death of her niece, and I described to her the manner in which it occurred. I also invited her to attend the funeral, and she arrived the day before it was to take place. She at first showed me great coldness when we met, but after she had read the report of the inquest her behavior became most violent. She accused me openly of being an assassin, and threatened she would never quit me till she had seen that justice had been done to her murdered niece. She told me, also, that if I dared to follow Clara to the grave, she would accompany me, and proclaim to every one that I was the murderer of my wife.

I tried in vain to calm the virago; all my efforts were useless. I left the house rather than be tortured with her reproaches, and I spent the night on the sofa at my chambers. The next morning, I found that a man in plain clothes, but who was evidently a policeman, had been on duty on the staircase all night; so at least I was informed by the porter, who cast on me a significant, surly glance as he spoke. I went home, determining that I would expel Clara's aunt from the house, and set the threats she had made me at defiance. I found her and told her my determination, but she refused to leave. I sent for the police; but they would not interfere. Irritated beyond endurance, and miserable in the extreme, I locked myself in my bed-room, determining not to leave it till the funeral was ready.

In about an hour's time, the dull noise made by the undertaker's men recalled me to the necessity of bracing myself up for the occasion. Sorrowful as their preparations made me, anxiety as to the probable behavior of

Clara's aunt was perhaps the predominant feeling in my mind. Half an hour before the time of leaving the house, I left my bed-room, and entering the dining-room, found there the only other mourner, the doctor. He received me with a stern civility, and when I put out my hand to shake hands with him, he pretended not to see it.

The undertaker entered, and, after putting the crape on the hats and fastening the cloaks, told us the carriage was ready. As I left the room with the doctor, I heard the hearse move off as we passed along. Arrived in the hall, I saw before me the tall, gaunt figure of Clara's aunt. Stretching out her arm and pointing at me, she exclaimed:

"That man has murdered my niece, and has attempted to murder her child."

I attempted to pass her without answer, but it was impossible, for she placed herself directly in my way, and repeated the words she had made use of, adding that I should never leave the house if she had strength enough to prevent it. Enraged, I rushed at her and attempted to thrust her aside; but passion had given her force, and I could not move her. The undertaker and his men interfered, and the doctor, scandalized at the scene, requested me to speak a word with him in private. We retired for a moment into the study.

"You must be aware," he said, "of the unpleasant suspicion which is abroad concerning the death of your wife, and the rumor of the attempt on the life of her child. For my part, I make no remark on the subject; but let me advise you to abstain from following the corpse to the grave. You see how determined that woman is, and a most unpleasant scene will be the result if you persist in your determination. I can easily un-

derstand your wish to pay a last mark of respect to your wife; but if you remain here I will bear witness of your wish to attend the funeral, and that it was no fault of yours that you did not."

The undertaker also argued in the same manner. I was likewise aware the violent woman was waiting to meet me, and I reluctantly resolved to follow the advice the doctor had given me, and remain at home.

I remained in my room till evening; I then left the house, intending to see George. On my road thither I found I was followed. I knocked at the door. The servant that opened it looked at me with curiosity and aversion. She showed me into the parlor, and a few minutes afterwards her mistress entered. Her manner showed her aversion to my presence, as clearly as her servant had done before her.

I told her I wished to see George.

"He is now in bed," she replied; "but otherwise, I could not allow you to see him. A lady has been here to-day who told me I was on no account to do so, as proceedings were being instituted to deprive you of his guardianship. I have consulted my solicitor, and he advises me to allow no one to see or interfere with him till the law has designated the individual who shall have legal authority over him."

Here was another blow. I had always been fond of the child, and I was now his legal guardian. His mother's property descended to him; but who could ever accuse me of a dishonest action? That insult might at least have been spared me.

Finding the schoolmistress was inexorable, I left the house and went home. The next morning I determined on a different plan of action. I sent for the inspector of police, and he soon attended. I told him it was my in-

tention to sell the house and furniture by public auction. I inquired if he, on the part of the police, had any objection to make or suggestion to offer, as I wished to afford him every opportunity in my power.

He told me candidly he was ordered to keep a strict watch upon my movements, but he was not authorized to go beyond that. He suggested that if I contemplated a sale, I should allow perhaps a fortnight to pass over before it took place, as it would show I was willing to allow time for further inquiry.

I readily met his views, and, more than that, told him I would leave the house in the care of the police till the time of sale. I immediately gave over to him the keys, and then, in his presence, I packed up a portmanteau and left the house, telling him, what he knew perfectly well, the address of my chambers.

I gave instructions to an auctioneer to sell the house and furniture, and I then began to think more collectedly on my position; but the calmer the view I took of it, the worse it appeared. I found I was still watched by the police. All my friends turned their backs on me; some, indeed, went so far as candidly to decline my acquaintance. I appeared to have no one left in the world who sympathized with or cared for me. At last I found proceedings were being instituted to deprive me of the guardianship of George. I attended in court when the cause came on. I heard myself described as a person in whose custody the poor child's life might be in danger. Every term of reproach short of abuse was hurled at me, and the judge evidently considered the barrister was not overstepping the bounds of propriety. Seated in court was Clara's aunt, watching the whole proceedings, and looking at me with a stern grim satisfaction when any insult or injustice against me was

uttered. Her continual glances at me drew the eyes of the bystanders on me, and I found an expression of aversion marked on the faces of them all. I remained in court till the persecution became intolerable, and I then rushed wildly from it.

Once in the open air, a feeling of reckless defiance came over me. Every person I met I looked sternly in the face, and every look I gave appeared answered by another, which seemed to tell that the individual suspected who I was. I hurried on, not caring whither I went, and treating with contemptuous anger the insulting remarks my behavior elicited. Still I walked on. When evening arrived, I found myself in the vicinity of Kensington Gardens. I thought that there I might find solitude, and I entered them. "You will not have time to be long here," said the gate-keeper; "we close in half an hour." I paid no attention to his remarks, but still hurried on, choosing the least-frequented spots I could find.

The idea came over me, that if I could stay there all night, I might there at least be at peace. It was a lovely summer's evening, and all nature, but myself, seemed hushed in repose. I hid myself in a clump of trees, and remained there till it was quite dark. I then wandered out, as I was sure the gates would be closed. If the calmness of the scene kept any irritating circumstances from me, it by no means soothed my spirits. I wandered slowly about, unable even for a moment to fix my thoughts on any one subject.

The moon rose, and I saw more clearly around me. At last I strolled near the bridge over the Serpentine, and gazed at the water. A horrible fascination came over me as I looked at it, and drew me towards it. As I advanced, the attraction seemed to increase. Some-

thing appeared to whisper, that once under that water, all misery would be over. I fully knew the sin of the thought, but I could not resist it. As I stood there by the parapet gazing at the water, the fascination each moment became stronger. A moment more and it would have dragged me over. Suddenly the whole force of the iniquity I was about to commit came clearly on my mind. I raised my eyes to heaven, my hands still on the parapet of the bridge.

"O my God," I exclaimed, "save me from this great sin! Give me courage to bear the burden which for other sins Thou hast justly placed upon me. Consider my weakness, and help me from this temptation, for it is too great for me to bear. Help me in Thy great mercy, for my misery crushes me. Father, dear Father, be merciful unto me!"

My prayer was heard, and the horrible fascination vanished. I stood with my eyes raised to heaven in gratitude for its bounty. I took my hands from the stone parapet of the bridge, and placed them on my face. Tears came also to my relief, and they came abundantly. The feeling of calm increased within me. I felt almost happy. Something more than earth seemed to give me consolation. The feeling increased. I felt some heavenly power shedding peace around me. More and more distinct the sensation grew, and as I dropped my hands from my face, the feeling which tells us some one unseen is near us, came over me. It became more and more distinct, till I recognized that an invisible being stood at my left side. It was the same sensation which years before I had experienced after Ellen's death, when crossing Salisbury Plain, and yet I had hardly given a thought on Ellen for years. There, however, she was as distinct as formerly. I knew it was her

spirit, though no mute conversation now passed between us. The only word I felt she uttered was "Peace! peace!" Motionless as a statue, I stood for hours on the same spot, happy, thrice happy in the society of one I knew to be an angel. I turned not my head—I spoke not a word—I was there as one entranced. My angel stood by my side as motionless as myself, and as speechless, save the mute words, "Peace! peace!" We remained there till the pure dawn appeared, when my angel seemed to melt in it. When the day had fairly broken she had gone.

I returned to town, and again attended the court to hear the case argued. I there found Clara's aunt. The same diabolical expression was on her countenance, yet nobody seemed to think it extraordinary; while every one who was near me, regarded me, if not with aversion, evidently with surprise, as if astonished that I should have the audacity to appear in the light of day. I can now believe that I might have been to a certain extent deceived, and that their astonishment was caused by my agitated appearance, my pallid face, and disordered dress; for I had gone direct from the gardens to the court.

The case terminated, and the judges reserved their decision till a future day. In the mean time, George was to remain in the care of the lady with whom he was then residing. As I left the court, Clara's aunt cast on me the same look of deadly animosity I had received from her the day of the funeral. Had it occurred to me the day before, it would have wounded me deeply; but the soothing effect of the last evening was still over me, and I forgave her.

I now went to the auctioneer who was to sell my furniture. I was told he was from home, but that he was

expected in shortly, and I could wait if I pleased. The clerk who had answered had on his countenance the same look of astonishment I had noticed on the faces of those I saw in court. Several persons went in and out of the office while I stayed, but they all regarded me with the same expression. One, after he had looked at me with some sympathy mixed with his surprise, addressed some questions in a whisper to the clerk, who replied to him at some length, but in so low a tone I could not catch what he uttered; but I was convinced he was speaking of me.

"Oh," said the gentleman on leaving, and casting on me a glance of dislike as he spoke, "Banquo's ghost, I suppose."

I felt no annoyance at the insult, but sat quietly in my place. Shortly afterwards the auctioneer came in, and in reply to my inquiry, he told me that all was prepared, that the advertisements and posting-bills were out, and that the sale would be held that day fortnight. During the time he spoke, the same look of surprise was on his countenance I had noticed on the others.

I left him, and determined on going to my chambers for the purpose of obtaining some refreshment, for I had had no breakfast. On my way, I saw two or three persons reading a newspaper placard placed in front of a bookseller's shop-window. I mechanically stopped to look at it. The chief articles of interest the paper contained were marked upon the placard in large letters. Among them I noticed—"Further particulars of the mysterious death of Mrs. ——. Singular discovery tending to its solution."

"I hope the scoundrel will be hanged," said one of the readers.

"Hanging is too good for him by half," said his companion.

I felt no anger at these remarks, but proceeded onward to my chambers. As I passed the porter's lodge, I requested him to send my laundress to me with my breakfast. I entered my rooms; all appeared in order, as if I had been expected. I threw myself into my easy-chair, thoroughly exhausted, and endeavored to collect my thoughts. I determined, if possible, to support with patience the terrible misfortune under which I was laboring. I addressed a short but humble prayer to the Almighty for His support. A calm so delightful came over me, I felt almost happy. By degrees it concentrated itself into the certainty that beside my chair stood some being invisible to me, who was watching over me. So perfect was my knowledge of the fact, that I could distinguish it standing by my left side. One arm was thrown over the back of my chair, while the head bent over me. Gradually the identity became complete, and I recognized Ellen. She now did not confine herself to the one word, "Peace! peace!" but she conversed with me plainly and eloquently, though not a word was spoken. She reminded me how light my punishment would be if I had but resignation to His will. How perfect His justice was, and whatever misery I myself suffered, I should be compensated for it a thousandfold. She spoke also of another whose virtues were perfect, and who unjustly suffered. She told me to imitate His resignation with all the strength I had, and I should be supported in proportion to my resignation. Gently were her dear consolations poured over my senses; and I was enjoying a happiness the happiest might have envied, when all was broken by the entrance of the servant with my breakfast. The woman passed close by my left side,

utterly unconscious of the terrible misery she caused me. I rose from my chair, and giving way to an ungovernable fury, I upbraided her with every imprecation passion could find language for. The woman appeared perfectly astonished, and attempted an apology, but my rage made me deaf to her excuses. It seemed as if Satan had taken possession of my soul, and had determined on destroying what of heaven was left within me. At last I seized the woman brutally by the shoulders, and thrust her from the room, she screaming violently the while.

I again returned to my room, and threw myself into my easy-chair. I waited anxiously for the return of the spirit of Ellen; but she came not. I remained in the same position for some hours—with my breakfast untasted on the table. Suddenly my attention was aroused by some one at the outer door trying to enter. I immediately went to see whom it might be, and found it was a messenger from the police court, with a summons for me to attend there in three days' time, to answer a charge of assault preferred against me by my laundress. I had no alternative, so I promised to attend.

That evening I again spent in Kensington Gardens; but I received no visit from Ellen. The next day I wandered disconsolately about the streets till I was exhausted, and I then returned to my room. I again threw myself into my easy-chair, and waited anxiously for Ellen; but she came not.

The day for the summons to be heard arrived, and I attended at the police court. I felt terribly ashamed at the position my ungovernable temper had placed me in. At last I determined upon trying whether it would not be possible to effect a compromise with the woman, as well as apologize to her for my brutal conduct. I turned

round to find her, but she was not in court. I was leaving the court, expecting she would be outside, when a faint sensation of Ellen's presence came over me; but it was broken by a man passing so closely to my left side as almost to push me against the wall. In an instant my fury returned, and I loudly and angrily upbraided him for his rudeness. The magistrate, indignant at my interruption, immediately ordered me to be turned out of court, and his order was directly and roughly carried into effect.

The woman's case was called. She stated her complaint, and I had no defence to make. The magistrate rebuked me severely, stating that it was clear from my behavior that day in court, I was an ill-conditioned, quarrelsome fellow. He regretted he had not the power to punish me as I deserved, but he would impose on me the heaviest penalty the law would allow him. The fine I immediately paid, and I then left the court.

Several days passed over, but no visit from Ellen. I was alone and desolate in the vast metropolis; for none who knew me would converse with me, and strangers, as I passed them, regarded me with aversion. My temper, instead of improving, became more irritable; and I was perpetually quarrelling with those I met for passing too closely to my left side, for it was there I expected to find Ellen.

The day before the sale arrived, I determined to visit my home once more. I did so, and wandered sad and lonely through the rooms. I remained there till dark, wishing to leave the house without being recognized. I succeeded, though with some little difficulty. After I had gone a short distance, I turned round and gazed upon the house. All the circumstances connected with

it, all the various episodes of my life while dwelling in it, came crowding on my memory. My eyes filled with tears, my heart sank within me, as I turned away from it. Suddenly the well-known calm came over me, and in a moment I felt happy. The sensation became more perfect; and as I walked on I found the spirit of Ellen accompanied me, advancing as I advanced. The long distance before me was forgotten, and I took a by-road, so that I might avoid the driver of the carriage which had brought me, and continue my road to London on foot. Oh, how happy was I that night! As we proceeded we mutely conversed. Every sentiment, every consolation she offered me, was that of an angel. I began to blame myself for repining at my misfortunes, when they led to such happiness. I accused myself of ingratitude, and I thanked heaven for the bliss I was then enjoying. Onwards we went—mile after mile was passed—still, weak as I was, I felt not the least fatigue; and when morning broke, and I found myself in the suburbs of London, I regretted the night had terminated so soon, and that the way had not been longer. When I had arrived at my chambers, I still felt no sensation of weariness; I had no inclination for sleep, so I threw myself into my chair, and reflected on the happiness I had enjoyed. That day I received the intelligence that the judges had decided I was not to remain the guardian of George. I hardly felt the blow, so perfect was my resignation.

Day after day passed, and with the exception of the extreme annoyance I felt when any one approached too nearly to my left side, nothing occurred particularly worthy of remark. Many of my friends who had avoided me now again began to speak to me, particularly two or three members of the bar. They often

addressed me with great kindness. They proved to me that the various severe shocks I had received had occasioned too great a stress on my mind, and that I ought to be careful of myself. At last they proposed that I should submit myself to the care of an eminent physician, learned in cases of the kind. He considered that two or three months' seclusion would completely re-establish my health, and I could then again resume my profession.

At first I rejected the advice, but upon further consideration I determined to follow it. I was, I confess, principally induced to follow the advice from the thought, that being in seclusion, I should have more frequent opportunities of meeting Ellen than if I remained in London. My friends kindly took upon themselves the task of making the necessary arrangements; and the result was, that I became an inmate of this asylum.

Poor Mainwaring's narrative had interested me greatly; but although I wished to ask him many further particulars respecting it, he was so exhausted by the exertion he had made that I left him for that morning, determining to obtain from him at another opportunity more information on those points which appeared to me obscure or unsatisfactory. I did not, however, see him again for some days, as a change in the weather had confined him to the house, and he now no longer, from his infirm state, mixed with the other patients. At last, a fine dry day again induced him to leave his room, and I determined to profit by the opportunity it gave me.

He had already seated himself on the same bench when I perceived him. Few as had been the days since we had met, they had left visible traces on his person of their passage. Not a particle of color, except a sharply-

defined red spot on each cheek, was in his face. His hands were so thin, they seemed almost transparent. The little exertion necessary for him to traverse the distance from the house had terribly fatigued him, and he appeared hardly able to hold himself erect, had it not been for a staff which was in his hand. Death had so plainly set his seal upon him, that nothing short of a miracle could keep him on earth till the day he had predicted, the 14th of November. When he saw me approach, he beckoned to me to take a seat by his side. I did so, taking of course care on which side of him I seated myself. After the first greeting was over, he abruptly inquired of me how I thought he looked. I was puzzled what to answer, and he easily understood me.

"You think I look much worse," he said, smiling; "and you do not believe I shall live as long as I stated."

I tried to answer him, but could not.

"I perfectly understand you," he continued. "You are right, I shall not live till November. Ellen has informed me that my prayers have been heard, and that on her next visit I shall leave this world with her. When it will be, of course I cannot tell; but anxiously I am waiting for it."

"Have you often met her since you have been residing here as a patient?"

"Very often; and, doubtless, her visits would have been more frequent, had it not been for my infirmity of temper. For example, after my angry and uncourteous behavior to you on the day of your arrival, I was many days without a visit. When I remain in peace and goodwill towards all men, her visits are very frequent; but, as I said before, after an outbreak of temper, I have always had to remain till prayer and repentance have absolved me from my faults."

"But, knowing the penalty, why do you not restrain your temper?"

"My dear fellow, if you only knew what inexpressible happiness I receive from her visits, you would easily understand my sorrow at even a remote probability of her being disturbed, for she never comes when any one is near me on my left side. I cannot explain it, but some occult sympathy exists which draws my thoughts alway to the side she is accustomed to stand at. But all is now nearly finished; her next visit will be her last, and I shall then be happy."

"But," I remarked, "there is still a serious question to be asked, 'Are you prepared to die?'"

"I trust that, with my Redeemer's assistance, I shall be found so. It would be utterly at variance with the justice of the Almighty to imagine one of His angels might visit me and comfort me in my affliction, with my hope in heaven doubtful. No, sinner as I am, sinner as I have been, I feel the Divine bounty to be boundless; and I am certain the misery I have suffered on earth will be taken into account when the catalogue of my sins is called for. As you are now the only friend I have in this world, be with me at my parting. Let my last glance of earth be the face of a friend; my first sensation of heaven, the companionship of the angel who has so kindly watched over me, and whom when on earth I so fondly loved."

I readily promised him that I would certainly be with him. An assistant then came to him and informed him the doctor considered it would be better for him not to remain longer in the cold air; and we parted.

Soon afterwards he became too ill to leave his room. I spent each morning more than an hour with him. He sank daily. One thing particularly preyed upon my

mind, and that was, whether it was right on my part to allow him to die with such an absurd delusion on him, or to persuade him, if possible, of its folly. I wished to adopt the latter course; but yet it appeared cruel on my part to destroy the happiness the illusion caused him. I, however, resolved to consult the doctor on the subject.

"You will do no good," he said; "the delusion is too firmly grafted on his mind to be eradicated now at the eleventh hour. Depend upon it, also, the justice and bounty of the Almighty are too perfect to count that as a sin which is simply a misfortune. Let me advise you not to interfere in the matter."

I promised to follow his advice, and although I was sorely, on more than one occasion, tempted to the contrary, I kept the promise I had made.

About ten days after our last interview in the garden, the nurse called me up one night and requested me to go immediately to Mr. Mainwaring's room, as he was evidently sinking fast. She did not, she said, expect he would live the night through. I hurried after her, and found her statement but too true—he was dying. He was lying on his back; his thin arms, extended beside him, were placed upon the counterpane; and his face was somewhat turned towards the left side of the bed. He was still conscious. He turned his head partially round when he heard me enter, and gave me a smile of recognition, but said nothing. I doubt whether he had sufficient strength left to speak. I stood at the foot of the bed, and the nurse at the right side. The night-light burnt dimly, and all around us was still as the grave the poor fellow was shortly to repose in. For more than two hours did we remain motionless and silent. Suddenly Mainwaring's respiration seemed to

cease; he partially raised his head from the pillow, and stretched his arms upwards for a moment, as if to embrace some person leaning over him; his head then sunk quietly back, his arms fell by his side—and poor Mainwaring had joined his first love.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TWO GOVERNESSES.

Among the guests at table on the day of my arrival was a tall, ladylike, and rather elderly woman, of a somewhat foreign aspect. I afterwards found she was a native of France, but had been so many years in England, there was only the slightest trace of her foreign origin to be found in her accent. Mme. Reumont had a most amiable expression of countenance, and I afterwards found out that her countenance was a faithful mirror of her mind. During the meal I conversed with her occasionally. She was evidently well educated, and she spoke on every subject brought forward with so much good sense, that not the slightest appearance of insanity of any kind would be detected in it. Had it not been for a certain marked prudery she exhibited, a certain governess-like appearance of rigid propriety of manner in choosing her expressions, she would have pleased me immensely; but the certainty that she was talking for effect, that, in French theatrical phrase, the *rampe* was always before her, considerably impaired the impression she would otherwise have made on my good opinion. She retired early from the dinner-table; but I saw her again for a short time at Mrs. Meadows's tea-table in the evening. For the next three or four days we met regularly at dinner; but nothing on either occasion was elicited from her to make me change the opinion I had first formed of her.

About a week after our first acquaintance, I had occasion to change my mind with respect to her sanity; and I was obliged to admit that in her case also her friends had acted with discretion in placing her under restraint, not from any danger which might have occurred by her being at large, but from the ridicule to which she would have been exposed when giving way to the extraordinary delusion under which she was laboring.

After breakfast one morning, I visited the attic story of the house, the division of the front rooms of which, as I have already stated, had been removed for the purpose of forming a corridor for the patients' exercise in cold, windy, or wet weather. When I entered, I found it empty, and its silence pleased me. I do not remember what induced me to go there that morning, for the weather was fine. Perhaps it was to indulge in a little solitude, or possibly to enjoy the extensive view from the windows over the surrounding country. My attention was presently attracted to perhaps a score of lads who were exercising as recruits for the militia, under the instructions of a drill-sergeant. From their extraordinarily clumsy manner and ungainly appearance, I should imagine it was their first or second day of training. I watched them for some time, for their blunders afforded me considerable amusement. Presently I heard some one near me as if in great grief; and on turning round, I found at an adjoining window Mme. Reumont, with her elbow on the sill, and her head placed on her hand, weeping bitterly.

Surprised and somewhat alarmed, I immediately approached her. I wished to offer her some consolation; but I feared that, if I asked her the cause of her grief, I might be guilty of some indiscretion. As soon as she was aware I was beside her, she raised her head,

and with her eyes suffused with tears, she pointed with her hand to the militia-men exercising on the common. She attempted to speak, but her grief prevented her. She remained thus for a few moments. At last, words came to her relief. "Ah," she said, "in how short a time will not one of these men be alive!" I could not dispute the point, but even while admitting its truth, I could not imagine why it should afflict her so terribly, as, in point of age, she might easily have been the mother of the oldest man among them. However, I begged she would not distress herself on such a subject, as it was a fate from which neither of us could possibly escape.

Although she did not attempt to dispute my reasoning, it did not appear to afford her the slightest consolation. In fact, the certainty of her own death and mine seemed to be matters of perfect indifference to her; but she still pointed to, and gazed with intense and genuine sorrow visible in her countenance at the militia-men. At last, I succeeded in getting her from the window, and was on the point of leading her down stairs, when we met the doctor.

"Mme. Reumont," he said, somewhat angrily, "you know I have often requested you never to go into the upper corridor; and you have promised me to follow my advice. Whenever I trust those under my care, I have the habit of placing the most implicit reliance in them; and it annoys me greatly to find myself deceived."

"I really am very sorry, doctor," she said; "but pray pardon me; I could not help it. As soon as I heard the voice of the sergeant, the attraction became greater than I could resist; but I will endeavor in future to show more resolution. Pray, look over it this time."

The doctor bowed somewhat coolly; and at that moment a female assistant coming up, Mme. Reumont left us, and went to her room.

"You would greatly oblige me," said the doctor to me, as soon as we were by ourselves, "if you would persuade Mme. Reumont to leave the corridor whenever you find her there, especially when any of the militia are exercising on the common, as it invariably brings on a relapse."

"But," I inquired, "in what way can that influence her? Has she lost any one dear to her that was in the army, that the sight of a few soldiers, and such clumsy recruits as those, should have so painful an effect upon her feelings?"

"I am sorry to say there is nothing of the romantic in her case to raise your sympathy. Never was there one within these walls whose malady arose from a more commonplace origin. Poor Mme. Reumont has been, from the time she was sixteen years of age, till the last few years, a governess. For the first ten years she was in a ladies' school. She then left it to take charge of the preparatory education of a little boy, the son of a widowed Irish nobleman. Shortly after her arrival he married again. His second wife had a family rapidly, but they were all boys. As Mme. Reumont was much liked (understand, the Mme. is only brevet rank, for she is still unmarried), she continued in her situation, and the education of all these sons was confided to her till they had reached ten or eleven years of age, when they were sent to school. Although the nobleman had during his first wife's lifetime resided regularly on his estate, the second found the climate did not agree with her health, and, in consequence, his lordship was generally absent from Ireland the greater part of the year, leaving

to Mme. Reumont the charge of the children, and that of the house to an old female servant who had been bred upon the estate. The mansion, or rather castle, was situated in a barren and almost desolate part of Ulster. Nothing could be more dull or uninteresting than the life poor Mme. Reumont led during the absence of his lordship. The population, not only in the immediate neighborhood, but for miles round, was exceedingly small, and among them was not one gentleman's family. The natural gayety of the poor Frenchwoman, and her national facility to adapt herself to all situations, would soon have induced her to seek for acquaintances among the more respectable tenants on his lordship's estate, but that nobleman's ideas, and still more so, her ladyship's, were exceedingly aristocratic, and Mme. Reumont was forbidden to associate with their neighbors, lest the children might acquire vulgar, common habits, at variance with the position in the society they were destined to mix with. Miserable as the snobbism appeared to Mme. Reumont, she was obliged to obey the orders. It was also impossible for her to form intimacies with the domestics of the establishment, and the result was that the poor woman, being in the midst of a certain society, was obliged to pass her life in a sort of solitary confinement, totally unrelieved, except by her duties to her young pupils. They, of course, were no intimates for her, and the poor Frenchwoman submitted in silence and resignation to the almost insupportable solitude of her existence, made only bearable by the knowledge that out of her earnings she was able largely to contribute to the maintenance of an aged mother who resided in a village in Lorraine. But this life of seclusion, so averse to her national taste and natural temperament, did not pass without its effects on her mind, which

at last began to sink under it. At first she concealed the depressing effect with great resolution, but the very effort concealment required brought on a still greater weakness. How it occurred that the disease took the particular turn it did, it is impossible to say; but it seems to have settled itself upon the most wearisome portion of her duties. One great wish of his lordship was, that his children should have a good classical education, and to obtain this the more certainly, Mme. Reumont was especially directed to instruct them in the first principles of Latin grammar and a somewhat more extended knowledge of Greek and Roman history. It was upon Greek history that her mind appeared first to give way; perhaps, from the insupportable monotony of continually, year after year, going over it with her seven pupils, about as distasteful a task as could be well imagined to a lively Frenchwoman, confined almost a prisoner in a solitary Irish mansion. The immediate cause which brought the malady to an apex I cannot trace, but at last the poor woman's delusion centred itself in the belief that she was the Persian tyrant Xerxes. Perhaps the concentration of the malady was brought on by the news of the sudden death of her mother, to whom it appears she was much attached, for it developed itself in that form a few months after she heard of it. Her eccentricities, when first imagining herself the Eastern despot, were so absurd, that she was obliged to be placed in strict confinement. By attention and kindness the malady has much abated; indeed, it hardly ever appears unless some unlucky allusion is made to Greek history, or she sees some of those unfortunate militia-men exercising, when it immediately returns."

I told the doctor the remark she had made on the

anticipated death of the soldiers, which she had evidently taken from a school edition of Greek history.

"Precisely so," he said; "and for that reason I wish you would always, if possible, prevent her from going into the corridor when those recruits are at their exercise."

"But who pays for her residence here?" I inquired. "Has she any property of her own?"

"Not a shilling. His lordship and two of her elder pupils, who are now out in the world with good government appointments, each subscribe something for her maintenance, and I have no doubt they will continue to do so as long as she lives."

We missed Mme. Reumont from the dinner-table for two or three days; and at first, when she again made her appearance, she seemed uneasy and confused. However, the feeling appeared gradually to leave her; and before the termination of the meal, she had completely recovered herself, and was as conversational and amiable as ever. I much wished to reason with her afterwards on her absurd delusion, but refrained, from fear of annoying her. Indeed, it would have been most uncharitable on my part to have caused her any pain or uneasiness, for a more amiable woman than she was it would be difficult indeed to meet.

About six months after I had taken up my residence at the hall, another lady joined our party, also a governess. Miss Mortimer, the new-comer, was an Englishwoman, between forty and fifty years of age. Although ladylike in her manner, and rather good-looking, from the first moment I saw her I took a great dislike to her. There was apparent, through her plausible manner, a fawning, cat-like duplicity, which told that, while she could put softly forward the velvet paw, it contained, at

the same time, scarcely concealed, some hidden sharp claws. I was not deceived in the opinion I had formed of her; a more fawning, false, selfish creature I believe never existed. Indeed, I am persuaded her malady originally arose from the accumulated selfishness in which, through the course of her life, she had indulged. Her plausible manner she had acquired during her career as a governess. She had been for many years in the family of an English nobleman, whose daughters she had educated, and who had at his death left her an annuity of £200 a year. As soon as she was at liberty to indulge without restraint in the utter selfishness of her disposition, she did so, and with so much ardor, that she made herself an object of ridicule to all who knew her.

I am unable to trace the history of her insanity from the simply ridiculous to monomania; but to that point it at last arrived; and she was, when she made her appearance among us, laboring under the delusion that she was made of glass, and that the slightest accident that might occur to her, or the slightest blow she might receive, would infallibly cause her to split.

As soon as the doctor had informed us of her delusion, we immediately understood the cause of the singular appearance she made when she first presented herself at our table. "Although well and even richly dressed, there was about her an appearance of being "made up," especially in bulk, to an extent far more preposterous than even the fashion of the present day, when crinoline reigns predominant; and this was the more remarkable, as her face told us she was exceedingly thin." Her circumference did not convey that "balloon-like lightness which is now so conspicuous in ladies' dresses, but was rather of the Dutch-doll appearance, an accumulation of petticoats one over the other." These, we now discov-

ered, were worn to prevent the effects of any accidental blow; and the cautious manner in which she invariably seated herself in her chair showed us the idea of an accident was always dominant in her mind."

During the first few weeks of her residence among us, we had little to complain of in her behavior; but afterwards the cloven foot began rapidly to show itself. She was one of those women who expect to monopolize, if not the whole, at least the principal portion of the attention of those present; and as Mme. Reumont had been some time with us, and had acquired the affection and respect of us all, we were not inclined to transfer our allegiance to the new-comer. After several vain attempts to gain the ascendency, and finding there was no chance of success, she changed her tactics, and contented herself with annoying, with every sort of feminine spite, poor Mme. Reumont. I remember perfectly well the time she commenced her first system of attack. It was one day at the dinner-table. The meal must have been nearly concluded, for the sweets were on the table. Some subject had been the source of general conversation among us in which Mme. Reumont was well informed. She spoke on it with great intelligence; and we all listened to her with attention and pleasure. Miss Mortimer frequently took part in the discussion, but she was as ignorant of the merits of the case as Mme. Reumont was well informed. Miss Mortimer, finding she could not take the lead, sat sulky for some little time, in fact, till there was a lull in the conversation, when she took up a table-spoon, and lifting it in a theatrical manner over a rice-mould pudding on the table she helped herself to some of it, exclaiming at the time, in a loud, marked, burlesque tone, "Athos, thou proud and aspiring mountain, if thou darest to throw obstacles in

my way, I will cut thee down, and throw thee into—my plate!"

Poor Xerxes immediately fired up at hearing this cruel and utterly unprovoked parody on the unfortunate bombastic speech which she made on the occasion of her Greek invasion. She rose from her chair, and, putting herself in a dignified attitude, was on the point of commencing as dignified a speech, when the doctor advanced, and kindly taking her by the hand, led her gently from the room, casting, at the same time, a look of reproach at Miss Mortimer, of which, however, that amiable lady took no notice whatever, being fully satisfied with the annoyance she had caused her innocent rival.

The ladies met again in the evening in the garden, where open war was declared between them, at least, so far as the amiable and peaceful character of poor Xerxes would allow her to take part in it.

"Permit me to remark, Miss Mortimer," she said, "that your unprovoked attack upon me at the dinner-table neither did your goodness of heart nor good breeding the slightest credit. Fortunately, the shaft you hurled at me did me no harm in the eyes of those present. It would show a poor spirit indeed in any gentleman to find pleasure in hearing the unparalleled misfortunes which formerly befell me made a subject of ridicule."

"Are you quite certain, madam," retorted Miss Mortimer, "that the misfortune you are stated to be laboring under here—the absurd delusion you allude to—is not altogether feigned, to attract an amount of sympathy from those we are living with, which you would hardly obtain without that feeling of pity, which the poet tells us is akin to love, to excite it?"

"Your attack, madam, is too contemptible for me to

notice," replied Xerxes, now highly offended; "your insults, I assure you, will but little annoy me. The greater of two sorrows is generally the only one felt; and I have one so great to occupy my mind, that it leaves but little room for your petty taunts to find a place in it. A fall as great as mine, all will admit, is ample sorrow for one mortal to undergo. Besides, had I been laboring under a delusion, as the doctor, I know, believes, it would be but a mean attempt on your part to taunt me with it, when I have shown your ridiculous infirmity so much more charity."

"My ridiculous infirmity!" almost screamed Miss Mortimer; "pray, what do you mean? Few, I believe, are less subject to infirmities than I am."

"The absurd idea that you are made of glass."

"O madam," said Miss Mortimer, in a tone of reproach, "I pity you! If you can speak of as terrible a misfortune as ever fell to the lot of a human being in that manner, you are unworthy of my notice." Then bursting into tears, she continued, "It is a shame and disgrace that such a bold-faced creature as you are should be allowed to remain in the house."

"Bold-faced creature, madam!" replied Xerxes, in a towering passion. "Bold-faced creature, indeed! Pray, what right have you to apply such an insult to me?"

"Well, madam," said Miss Mortimer, sneeringly, "perhaps I was wrong. I ought certainly to make excuses for defects in education. Your Eastern ideas on the subject of love and matrimony, although abhorrent to our English notions of propriety, may in part be excused. Still, I cannot shut my eyes to your daily attacks on the gentlemen present at the dinner-table. Not being content with one, after the fashion of Englishwomen in general, you smile upon all, as if you were

still residing in your own country, and indulging in its very liberal ideas on subjects of the kind."

Now, this was too much for poor Xerxes. Notwithstanding her fabled Eastern origin, a more retiring, ladylike, well-conducted woman never existed; and the cruel taunt told home.

"Madam," she said, with much dignity of manner, "I despise your insinuations, and refuse to reply to them. One thing, however, you must allow me to remark, and justice to yourself requires it. I am fully convinced your delusion is not feigned. The quantity of clothes you wear proves it."

"The quantity of clothes I wear, madam?"

"Yes, of clothes you wear. It is on your part a very prudent precaution. Being made of glass, and therefore liable to be seen through, it is a very safe precaution. Otherwise you might be better known than you are at present, and in consequence might be more easily detected."

"Oh, you abominable woman, to treat me in that manner!" cried Miss Mortimer, bursting into a violent flood of tears, and at the same time showing strong symptoms of an approaching hysterical fit; "oh, you wicked creature, I will never forgive you for it. Oh dear, how ill I feel! I shall faint."

"Pray, madam," said Xerxes, with bitter sarcasm in her tone, "pray, do not faint. Consider, in falling you might crack yourself; and that, in your case, would be dangerous indeed."

All symptoms of fainting immediately vanished from Miss Mortimer, and a fit of passion so violent supplied its place, that we were obliged to interfere; and the dispute, for that evening, was ended.

Xerxes did not make her appearance at the dinner-

table for some days after the squabble: and there was then an appearance of shame on the poor woman's face that was painful to see. We all treated her with the greatest respect and attention; but it was some time before the unpleasant effect of the dispute completely vanished from her mind. Miss Mortimer, on the contrary, presented herself the next day as if nothing out of the usual way had occurred. So far from appearing abashed, she seemed to take every opportunity of filling the place Xerxes had occupied in the minds of those present; and attempted to make herself as agreeable as possible. She, however, did not succeed; for none of us liked her, and we hailed with joy the reappearance of Xerxes at the table. Miss Mortimer easily perceived this, and she tried to content herself by saying, on every possible occasion, disagreeable things at her rival. We, however, by a sort of tacit agreement, determined on never taking the least notice of them; and, in time, Xerxes herself began to get used to them, and allowed them to pass with comparatively little notice.

Winter came on, and it brought with it to Miss Mortimer what was, in her estimation, a terrible accident, but which to others would have been thought of very trifling importance. One day, when walking in the garden after a sharp frost, her foot slipped upon some ice on the path, and she fell with some slight force on her back. The assistants soon became aware of the fact from her violent screams. When they arrived at the spot and were upon the point of raising her, a difficulty arose none had calculated on. She declared that she had broken her back, and that if they attempted to raise her without the greatest caution, she would tumble in pieces. They endeavored to please her, but the mo ment they attempted to lift her she screamed so fear-

fully that they were obliged to quit their holds. After a short delay the doctor arrived, who so far fell in with her absurdity that he ordered a feather-bed to be brought, and on it, with great care, Miss Mortimer was placed; her terror at the operation preventing her from noticing the ill-restrained laughter of all around her.

For more than a week afterwards we, to our great satisfaction, heard nothing of her, with the exception that she fancied she was laboring under a transverse fracture of the back, which, if the fissure should extend to the front, would end by her falling in two pieces. To prevent this, she, having sufficient knowledge of natural philosophy to be aware how easily glass will split upon exposure to sudden changes of temperature, 'especially when already containing a flaw,' ordered a thermometer to be placed at the foot of her bed, and whenever she noticed the variation of a degree in the heat of the room she insisted on the assistant warming or cooling it to the point desired. To such an extent was her self-anxiety carried, that the patience and strength of the assistant were fairly worn out by her demands, and she informed the doctor that if he could not effect some change in his patient she must leave the establishment, as it was impossible to put up with her continued and absurd caprices. The doctor, finding all arguments useless, at last decided on the following expedient: He told Miss Mortimer that the only way of insuring the safety of her back, and indeed of saving her life, was for her to submit to an operation. He proposed placing at equal distances in her back, six rivets, which would not only prevent the fracture from enlarging, but also restore her to health. At first she objected to the proposition on account of the pain it would cause her, but this objection was neutralized by his offering to perform the

operation on her while under the influence of chloroform, and then, of course, it would be painless. This somewhat reassured her; but another objection arose. Miss Mortimer was a lady of extreme propriety of demeanor, and the idea of the doctor seeing her back was so repugnant to her feelings that she could not bring her mind to submit to the operation, much as she wished it to be performed. Her dread of an increase in the fracture, however, became so great, that she determined to consult Mme. Reumont on the subject; Miss Mortimer being one of those who consider that an injured person should forget the injury as soon as the perpetrator ceases to inflict it, whenever the perpetrator and the thinker are one and the same individual.

Mme. Reumont's French politeness was sorely taxed to keep from laughing when Miss Mortimer placed the case before her. At last, when she had acquired sufficient command of countenance, she begged Miss Mortimer not to delay a moment in having the operation performed; that false modesty ought not to intrude in the way when the salvation of a human being's life was in the balance. Miss Mortimer seemed greatly consoled on hearing Mme. Reumont's opinion. "I will submit, then, to the operation," she said, "if you advise it. But do me one favor. Promise me you will remain in the room at the time; gentlemanly as the doctor certainly is, it will be an assurance to me as well as a comfort."

Mme. Reumont having given her the promise, the doctor was spoken to on the subject, the operation was decided on, and the next day was fixed for its performance. The doctor afterwards described to me the scene. He assured me it was altogether ludicrous. He, indeed, had only to restrain his feelings till Miss Morti-

mer was under the influence of chloroform, and he then gave full sway to his merriment. Of course no operation took place. Miss Mortimer lay there totally insensible, to wake up in the idea that her accident had been perfectly cured by a tedious, though painless operation; while poor Xerxes stood by with a look of intense triumph cast on her prostrate but merciless enemy. With folded arms and erect figure, her head thrown slightly back in an attitude of command, a smile of supreme contempt on her countenance, her satisfaction seemed to increase till she could contain it no longer, and she exclaimed aloud, though somewhat misappropriately, "I have gotten Themistocles the Athenian."

Miss Mortimer's recovery was exceedingly rapid, and her gratitude to the doctor was of the warmest description.

"I shall never be able," she said, in confidence to Mme. Reumont, a few days after the operation, "to acquit the amount of obligation I am under to that man. His learning and kindness are above all praise. So skilfully has he performed the operation, that I cannot detect the presence in my back of one single rivet. How fortunate, my dear, that he did not adopt my advice and have me cemented. Suppose I had been taking a warm bath, and the cement had melted in the heat, as I understand it is likely to do, why, I might have come in pieces in the water!"

About a fortnight after the operation, Miss Mortimer again joined the party at the dinner-table, and the very first day made herself disagreeable by attacking poor Xerxes. The latter, however, took no notice of it, and it passed off. But although Mme. Reumont showed the greatest amiability and patience under the gratuitous annoyance which was daily repeated, to the rest of the

company, Miss Mortimer became insupportable, and all unanimously insisted on the doctor sending her away. As our wish was strongly seconded by all the assistants, who cordially detested her, the doctor acceded to our request, and Miss Mortimer, to the great joy of us all, left the establishment.

CHAPTER VII.

A DOCTOR'S WOOING.

One day a handsome carriage stopped at the gates of the asylum, and a lady descended from it, who asked to see the doctor. She was shown into his private apartment, and I happened to be with him when she entered. I do not remember when I have seen a person whose appearance caught my attention more fixedly, or with greater admiration, than hers. She was far from young—certainly, she could have been little less than fifty years of age—yet she possessed one of those faces, so frequently found among Englishwomen of her time of life, which impress the beholder with respect as well as pleasure. It was one of those countenances, found only among our countrywomen, which keep the extraordinary loveliness of their younger days with the grandeur due to mature maternity. She was an admirable specimen of that description of beauty. Her face was, to me, perfectly lovely, not only from the well-regulated charm of feature, but from the almost angelic mildness of expression which beamed from it—an expression utterly devoid of insipidity, but, on the contrary, showing promise of great intelligence. Her eyes were blue and liquid; her mouth admirably formed, and which, when open, showed a set of teeth so white, that many a beauty of eighteen might have sighed with envy on beholding them, yet totally devoid of that abominable dentist's mechanism which so frequently spoils the mouths of even young

girls of the present day. Her hair was auburn, but occasionally a silver thread might be traced in it. Her figure was tall, and although somewhat stout, still beautifully made, presenting all that majesty so frequently met with in Englishwomen of her age. In conclusion, she was quietly, handsomely, and richly dressed. Though it is now more than three years since I saw her, she is still as fresh in my memory as she was at the moment she entered the doctor's room.

She appeared, from the manner in which she accosted the doctor, and the pleasure he exhibited at seeing her, to be on intimate terms of friendship with him. She explained to him, that as she had accepted an invitation from a friend, who lived some ten or twelve miles distant from the asylum, to spend a fortnight with her, she considered it would have been an act of great unkindness on her part if she had left that part of the country without calling on a friend to whom she was under so many and such great obligations. The doctor, on his part, and evidently with perfect truth, described the pleasure he felt at seeing her, and how great his sorrow would have been had he heard she had left without calling on him.

Thinking my presence might be indiscreet, I rose to leave them, but both the doctor and the lady asked me to remain. She inquired most anxiously after his family, and seemed much pained to find his wife and eldest child were from home, having left the asylum on some commissions for the doctor. She then asked to see the other children, but unfortunately they were out on the common with the nurse. They then conversed together, the lady asking many questions, not only relating to the doctor's family, but also connected with the asylum; indeed, so perfect did her knowledge of it seem, that for

the moment it somewhat surprised me. Not only inquiring after patients who were then residents, but respecting others who had long since left the establishment. She gave but little information of herself. I found that she was living at Hastings, that her son and daughter frequently visited her, and that she was already a grandmother. In fact, she appeared as happy, and I felt justly so, as it was possible for a mortal to be. As neither Mrs. Meadows nor the children returned, the lady said she could not remain longer, but that she would call on him again, if possible, before she left for Sussex, and she then hoped she would be able to see his wife and family. On rising, she said:

"By the by, doctor, how is the organ getting on?"

This was indeed touching the unfortunate man on his weak point. He appeared delighted at her remembrance of it.

"Oh," said he, "I work at it continually, and I flatter myself I am making great progress towards its completion. It is wonderfully advanced since you saw it. Since then I have placed in it more than one hundred new pipes, and I have been obliged to encroach on two other rooms to make space for them; so you may imagine we are rather crowded. Should you like to see it?"

"With great pleasure," was the answer, and we all three started off to view that accursed organ. I must say at the moment I felt somewhat surprised that so amiable and intelligent a woman should encourage the poor man in his insane absurdity, which would probably, if not lead to his ruin, at least in case of his death leave his wife and family in utter poverty. But then I remembered I was equally criminal in pretending that I was interested in it; and, after all, it was only a mis-

taken kindness on her part, thinking it might please the poor fellow.

I soon found the momentary objection I had taken to her conduct vanish. She inquired into points which were evidently without the slightest interest for her, with so much simulated interest, and listened with so much attention to his long and wearisome description, that I admired her even more than before for her kindness and patience.

We remained in the organ-room for perhaps half an hour, and then the lady, saying her time had expired, took a courteous leave of me, and the doctor conducted her to her carriage. He presently returned, apparently highly pleased with his lady friend's visit.

"Well, what do you think of my visitor?" he inquired, as soon as he saw me.

"I do not know when I have seen a woman whose appearance and manner pleased me more," I replied. "She is, in my opinion, as admirable a specimen of mature womanhood as ever I met with."

"If you knew her, then, as well as I do," he said, laughing, "it is difficult to say to what height your esteem would arrive."

"Is she as amiable and intelligent as she appears, or is it assumed?"

"The appearance she presents is a faithful index of her mind. She is so amiable, I believe it would be almost impossible to put her out of temper."

"Have you known her long?" I inquired.

"About four years, I think. Yes, it is full four years since she first came here as a patient."

"As a patient!" I remarked, aghast.

"Yes, she continued here for some months, and then left, perfectly cured."

I was for some moments dumb with astonishment.

"You appear surprised," he said, "at the idea of her ever having been a patient of mine."

"Truly I am," I answered.

"I do not know why. She is no more guaranteed against misfortune than her neighbors."

"But," I inquired, "do you not think there is always fear of a relapse?"

"Not the slightest. There is no more danger of her becoming insane than myself."

This was said with so much *aplomb* that I could hardly restrain a smile. The idea appeared the more absurd as we were at that moment seated in the organ-room.

"Who is she?" I inquired.

"She is a woman of fortune, a Mrs. Tyler, and married to a friend of mine, a physician."

"Tell me something more about her."

"Oh, it's a very long story, and at the same time a very curious one, but if you will come here after dinner and take a cup of coffee with me, I will tell you all I know about her."

I, of course, accepted the invitation, and we parted; I to take my accustomed walk in the grounds, and the doctor to enjoy himself with his insane hobby, the organ. I, of course, was true to my appointment. Mrs. Meadows was present, and after the tea-things had been taken away, and the little ones sent to their beds, the doctor commenced his narrative.

"The lady you saw was introduced to me by a retired medical officer of the East India Company's service. He had been stationed in the Bengal Presidency, but had been fortunate enough to obtain a considerable amount of private practice. He was not only much respected in

India, but when he left the country he brought with him a considerable and well-earned independence. From him I learned the particulars of the lady's history, and I think it will be better if I endeavor to relate it in his own words:"

Almost immediately after my arrival in England, I took lodgings in Pimlico, having some business to transact in London which would probably detain me some months. The house I selected had but little to recommend it, either in position or appearance, but as I am not very fastidious, those objections had but little weight with me. It was situated in a tall row of narrow houses not far from Buckingham Palace, and the whole neighborhood, I believe, was tenanted by a colony of lodging-house keepers. The house I was in was like all the others in external appearance, and possibly the interior might have corresponded with the others as well. I took two rooms on the ground floor, designated as parlors, though the back one was to be used as my bedroom. The drawing-room floor and three bed-rooms were occupied by an officer in the army, who had lately arrived in England from the Bombay Presidency, his wife, three children, and an ayah. One of the attics was inhabited by a medical student; the other, as I at first understood, was the sleeping-room of my landlady, but I afterwards found that it was tenanted by a law-writer. Where my landlady really slept I had no idea. I should have been sorry to imagine it was in the kitchen, inasmuch as such an idea would have been little agreeable, considering the amount of cooking carried on there for the various inmates of the house.

The house was furnished with great regard to effect, immense attention to economy, and very little to com-

fort. It appeared also to have been furnished at different epochs, as very few of the articles it contained appeared to belong to the same era. Four of the chairs in my sitting-room were evidently members of the same family, the remaining two were apparently strangers to the majority and to each other. One of the last-mentioned was an arm-chair, with a sickly-looking, washed-out chintz cover, and with one castor always out of repair; the other, a ponderous-looking, ebony-colored, uncomfortable, high and broad-backed piece of furniture, such, in fact, as modern artists and draughtsmen are accustomed to put into their interiors of old mansions. The principal ornament in the room was the looking-glass over the chimney-piece. It was evidently regarded by its proprietor with great pride, and was, moreover, treated by her with great respect—at least, at first sight that was my impression. Its frame was covered by a diagonally-cut paper, which had originally been of a yellow color, but which was fast turning into a blackish brown, from the dust and fly-spots which had collected on it during the time it had been on duty. On looking at it more carefully, I found the paper had more uses than one; it not only protected the frame from injury, but likewise charitably concealed from the vulgar gaze the total absence of gilding, which disfigured it in more than one spot, and which had evidently been caused by the unskilfulness of cheap housemaids, or by the still ruder hand of time. The plate itself was truthful enough, and had evidently first seen the day in a good manufactory, but the silvering was in many places defective; so much so, in fact, that although it might pass without much objection by a single gentleman lodger, it is doubtful whether any lady would have been so charitable, as it would have been impossible for her

to have seen much of her person at one time without some breach of continuity. The other ornaments on the chimney-piece were two china vases, showy and cheap, not pairs, except in the negative quality of dilapidations, and a small sort of jar in the centre for tapers. The remaining portion of the furniture in the sitting-room consisted of a shabby mahogany table. The appearance of this article was, however, somewhat embellished by a threadbare, stained green cloth being thrown over its surface. There were also, I should mention, a fender and fire-irons. I do not know whether there was a hearth-rug in winter, certainly there was none in summer—probably, indeed, as I afterwards learned, for the purpose of keeping the room cool.

The furniture of my bed-room was economical and simple in the extreme. Not a superfluous article was in it, but several might be mentioned whose presence would not have been considered as objectionable.

My landlady was a Mrs. Sandoy, a widow; and she was assisted in the duties of her house by her daughter, a young woman of perhaps twenty years of age, and a servant-girl of fifteen or sixteen, who from the shape of her features might have been pretty, but from the cloud of dirt which invariably covered them, the point always remained in doubt. I do not think I ever had a view of the girl's features in a clean state.

Mrs. Sandoy was a tall, attenuated, shabbily-dressed woman, about forty years of age. Her face, when a girl, had evidently been uncommonly handsome, and some beautiful vestiges of its former loveliness were occasionally visible, especially when she smiled naturally. I say naturally, for although when in conversation with me, there was a smile on her features whenever I smiled, there was something so artificial, so painfully

forced in it, that I easily saw through the deception, and I pitied her without knowing why. There was evidently nothing wilfully false in it, but a natural sort of politeness, as appearing to be pleased when I felt pleasure. The poor woman both attracted and annoyed me. I had conceived a great esteem for her, and I felt pleasure in speaking with her; at the same time I knew she considered every moment I detained her was an inconvenience, which she felt, and beyond that her wish to please was evidently from mercenary motives. And why should they have been otherwise? She could care nothing for me.

As Mrs. Sandoy's duties were principally confined to the kitchen, I was less frequently in communication with the mother than with the daughter, and with her I got on well enough. She was an active, handsome, good-tempered young woman; but what struck me particularly was the excellent language she made use of in the little conversations we had together, and the good education she appeared to have received. It was easy to perceive that neither mother nor daughter had been brought up in their present mode of life, but that the daughter, from her youth, had been quicker initiated in it than her parent. In fact, an individual less calculated to wage the battle of life than Mrs. Sandoy could hardly have been found; and all in their present speculation or employment would have gone wrong, had it not been for the greater energy and tact of her daughter. As it was, from what little I saw, the profits of the house easily allowed her to escape the imposition of the income-tax.

Things went on smoothly enough for the first month. Every thing the poor woman could do to please me I believe was done; and if all was not as comfortable and

well arranged as I could have wished, it was their poverty, and not their will, which caused it.

"After that, a little circumstance occurred which gave me great annoyance. I one day lost a sovereign from my room. Whom to suspect I knew not. It was, I was convinced, impossible either for my landlady or her daughter to have taken it, and the girl I shrank from suspecting. I mentioned the circumstance to Mrs. Sandoy, who appeared greatly vexed when she heard it. She told me she would make every inquiry concerning it, and that for the future either she or her daughter would arrange my bed-room, so there would be no fear of a thing of the kind again occurring.

For some days now Mrs. Sandoy waited on me herself, and I saw nothing of her daughter; but I, being somewhat of a taciturn disposition, made no remark on the subject. At last, her continued absence appearing strange, I questioned her mother about it. I received for answer that her daughter had been ailing for some little time past, and as a friend in the country had invited her to stay a few weeks at her house, she had accepted the invitation. Nothing, I thought, could be more reasonable, and the subject dropped.

A few days afterwards, there was a violent dispute between Jessie, the servant-of-all-work, and the medical student. The girl declared that on letting himself in with his latch-key, she had seen him go into my bed-room, and she had immediately followed him there. He, when he saw her, left hurriedly, muttering some excuse. She immediately told her mistress of the fact, who requested from him an explanation. He flatly denied that he had been in my room, and asserted that the girl had uttered a falsehood. Jessie, however, stuck to her text, and the student, after in vain attempting to brow-

beat her, rushed in a violent passion up stairs to his room. The next morning he did not descend, and on its getting late, Mrs. Sandoy went up stairs for the purpose of calling him, when she found he had silently quitted the house in the night, taking his very moderate luggage with him, and leaving a debt to the poor woman for the amount of two months' breakfasts and lodging.

"My daughter," said Mrs. Sandoy, when she was fully aware of her loss, "always warned me against him, as she was certain he was a dishonest young man, and now I find she was right. I have lost £6 by him, and, heaven knows, I could very ill afford it."

A few nights afterwards, on entering the house, I was much surprised to find the hall full of trunks and packing-cases. Shortly afterwards, two cabs came to the door, and the officer and his family, who occupied the first floor, went off in them. The next morning, I asked Jessie the cause of his leaving, and she told me the captain had been ordered off to India at a moment's warning, and, of course, was obliged to go. I knew that to be absurd, but I thought it likely the girl had made some mistake in what she had heard. I inquired if Mrs. Sandoy was again going to let the rooms; but she told me her mistress did not intend doing so for a few days, as they were to undergo a thorough cleaning. "Them Indians is so dirty," concluded Jessie.

The next morning, Jessie's mother came, and, without any warning, took her away. I heard Mrs. Sandoy arguing with the woman in a low tone of voice; but she replied sharply that she was not going to let her daughter die there to please anybody, and that she'd trouble Mrs. Sandoy to pay the wages owing at once. A few more remarks were made by Mrs. Sandoy, but in so low a tone, I could not distinguish what she said; and then

I heard some money paid, and the street door afterwards closed. As Mrs. Sandoy passed my door, I heard her say to herself, "What shall I do? my God! what shall I do?" Two days afterwards, the law-writer left the house, and I was the only lodger left in it.

Another circumstance, trifling enough in itself, came under my notice, and gave me great annoyance. I found my brandy disappear rapidly, although I kept it locked up in a cupboard. There could be no mistake about the culprit this time, for there were only Mrs. Sandoy and myself left in the house. Yet it was most extraordinary, for, apparently, a more sober, ladylike woman could not have been met with; but there was the stern fact before me plain enough—the brandy had been taken by some one, and it was not by myself. I had not the courage to speak to her on the subject, and I let the matter rest, contenting myself with carefully locking the cupboard each time I left the house. Nevertheless, my brandy still went, although I found the bottle, when I returned home, in the same place I had left it when I went out.

At last I discovered the culprit. It was my habit each day to leave the house immediately after breakfast, and not return to it till night, so that a person intending to profit by my absence had ample opportunity. One morning, however, I returned accidentally, and found what I had most unwillingly suspected to be true—Mrs. Sandoy was the individual who had taken my brandy. I had that morning placed on the chimney-piece a ten-pound note, intending, when I left home, to pay a tradesman in the neighborhood a debt I owed him. I was to spend that day with a friend at Greenwich, and there, after I had paid my debt, I intended proceeding. When I arrived at the tradesman's house, I found, to my great

annoyance, that I had left the bank-note at home, and I returned immediately to find it. I let myself in with my latch-key, and entered my sitting-room. In it I found Mrs. Sandoy, preparing to leave it. In her hand she held a tumbler, half full of brandy, which she clumsily attempted to conceal. She appeared dreadfully agitated and abashed when she saw me, but she left the room hurriedly, without saying a word. That the poor woman was shocked at being detected is certain; but great as her annoyance might have been, it was certainly inferior to my own. I had conceived a very great respect for her. To detect her in so filthy a habit as drinking, was exceedingly painful to my feelings. That it was mere sensual indulgence, and not dishonesty, that tempted her, I could prove by the fact that she had left the ten-pound note untouched on the chimney-piece.

I put the note in my pocket, and prepared to leave the house, sorrowfully enough. Before going, however, I determined on giving Mrs. Sandoy a hint that I was aware of her defalcations, infinitely less for my own protection, than a lesson to her to quit her disgusting habit. I rang the bell, and she shortly afterwards made her appearance. She seemed so ashamed and agitated, that for the moment I was sorry I had called for her, but, as she was in the room, I was obliged to say something.

"Mrs. Sandoy," I said, "I am sorry to say some one has been at my brandy, and it is not the first time either. You would greatly oblige me by putting a better lock on that cupboard-door, as the present one fastens it so imperfectly that any one can open it by merely shaking the door."

"Certainly, sir, if you wish it," she murmured rather than spoke.

Although her head was turned aside, I could easily

perceive she was crying bitterly. As I felt she had already repented of her fault, I made no further remark, but left the house.

It would be difficult to say how much the circumstance vexed me, or how completely it spoiled the pleasure of my day's excursion. My friend at Greenwich questioned me on my abstracted look; and I told him the whole circumstance, even to how much the poor woman had interested me in her favor.

"Look," he said, "with indulgence upon her. I hold that one-half the ignominy due to drunkenness in those of her class ought to be borne by the Government which permits the sale of the poison, as the tempter who puts it in the way of those whose miseries require a narcotic. After all, the spirit they drink, with many of these poor women, is simply chloroform to the mind in pain. It is not the love of the liquor which tempts them, but that it throws a veil over their miseries when under its influence. Say no more to the poor creature about it. It can do no good, but possibly may do harm. Your lesson, as far as you have given it, will either cure her, or she is past cure. If habit has become second nature in her, you will merely add the vice of hypocrisy to that of drinking, for she will conceal her habit from you, and indulge in it secretly. If, on the contrary, your lesson has taken effect, and she is the amiable woman you describe her, she will leave it off without further interference on your part, while every observation you make will be an unnecessary infliction on her."

I promised to follow his advice, and the subject dropped. I remained with my friend till about eight o'clock in the evening, and then returned to town by the train. When I arrived at the London Bridge station, I determined on walking home. I kept the Surrey

side of the river, traversing the back streets of the borough.

When I had reached Blackfriars' Road, I was uncertain which street I should take, and I waited for a moment to determine. It was then dark, and I attempted to see the name of the narrow street before me, but I did not succeed.

At last I resolved that it would be my best road; and I was on the point of entering the street, when I saw before me a weak, miserable, half-starved mongrel bitch turning cautiously into it before me. She made her way to a butcher's, on whose shop-board was spread a quantity of meat for sale. Before it stood the shopman, tempting passers-by to purchase, and calling their attention to the beauty of his merchandise, laid out, as it was, with a view to effect, in the flaring light of the gas. The mongrel walked cautiously and furtively up to the shop-board, and taking up her stand behind the shopman, she raised herself on her hind legs, and placing her muzzle on the shop-board, quietly and skilfully helped herself to a fine mutton-chop, and then started off as rapidly as she could with her prize.

She was, however, fated not to succeed. Quick as had been her movements, she had been seen by a bricklayer's laborer, and the "hue and cry" was immediately raised. A workman passing by caught the miserable thief by the skin at the back of the neck, and carried her to the shop with one hand, while with the other he held forward the mutton-chop, which the mongrel, perhaps, thinking it might be used against her as a *piece de circonstance*, had prudently dropped as soon as she found she was detected.

The workman threw the chop on the shop-board, and then placed the thief in the hands of the shopman.

The fellow evidently seemed determined to inflict such a punishment on the poor wretch as would not easily be effaced from its memory. He held her with one hand tightly down on her side on the pavement, and with the other he held his knife aloft in the air, with the intention of striking her heavily on the ribs with the flat side of it.

The poor wretch yelled when she saw the uplifted weapon, and was doubtless surprised when she found it did not descend upon her person. The cause of the change of opinion in the man was this: on placing the poor brute on her side, it brought to his notice that she was the mother of a large family, who were totally dependent on her for nutrition, and also that at that moment she had little or none to give them.

The butcher threw the knife on the shop-board, and taking up a lump of gristle with some flesh attached to it, which he had placed aside as useless, he loosened the hand he held her by, and, at the same moment, he flung at the liberated animal, with all the force he was master of, the lump of gristle he had taken up. It struck her a heavy blow on the back. The brute uttered a yell of pain and terror; but the next moment, perceiving the luscious quality of the missile, she seized it in her teeth, and, with the swiftness of lightning, she rushed away with her prize, passing with extreme dexterity between the legs of the passers, utterly indifferent to the shouts of laughter of all who saw her. I was too much amused at the kind cruelty of the good-natured fellow not to laugh myself; and I went on my way more cheerily than before.

When I arrived at home, I purposely made considerable noise as I placed the key in the lock of the door to give my landlady time to get out of my way, thinking it

might hurt her feelings if she saw me. I groped cautiously to my sitting-room to get my candle, which, with a box of lucifers, were always placed on my table ready for me when I came home; and having procured a light, I managed to get to my bed-room unobserved by Mrs. Sandoy.

Although greatly fatigued, when in bed I could not sleep. My thoughts were of a peculiarly mixed character, the ludicrous and the serious mingling singularly together. One moment I was thinking of the unpleasant circumstance which had taken place in the morning; the next, the absurd episode of the butcher's man and the mongrel came into my mind. When, at last, sleep came over me, the subject did not quit me, but continued to annoy me the whole of the night.

I arose late the next morning; and after I had dressed, I remained occupied in my bed-room for some time longer. Although I had an absurd dislike to confront my landlady, still I must have my breakfast, so screwing up my courage to the sticking-point, I went into my sitting-room. As I entered, I heard some one in it, but to my surprise I found it was not Mrs. Sandoy, but a little shabby old man in a ragged sort of hotel waiter's jacket, who was occupied in placing the breakfast-things on my table. He bowed a waiter's bow as I entered, but he said nothing. He quickly, and in evidently an experienced manner, completed his arrangements, and then left the room.

I was somewhat surprised and puzzled, but I did not let it appear. I wondered what could have induced my landlady to attempt this absurd burlesque of gentility at such a moment, and to me, utterly indifferent as I am to things of the kind. I became annoyed. I thought she had adopted the waiter as a sort of peace-offering for

having offended me the day before. After the lapse of a few minutes the old man again entered the room.

"Oh, if you please, sir, Mrs. Sandoy's compliments, and she would feel much obliged to you if you would lend her a shilling; it's to get some sugar and eggs for your breakfast."

"Certainly," I replied, and I gave him the money, inwardly disgusted at the idea of her being obliged to borrow a shilling, and at the same time hiring a waiter to do what she might easily have done herself. The old man went into the passage, and there appeared to hesitate for an instant. He then returned to the room.

"Oh, if you please, sir, would you be kind enough to let me in when I come back? Mrs. Sandoy is very busy this morning."

"Yes, I will open the door for you."

"Thank you, sir."

He went again into the passage, but immediately afterwards returned to me.

"I may depend upon you, sir, as a gentleman, opening the door for me?"

"Certainly; I told you so before."

"Hope no offence, sir?"

"Not at all; but do not be long, for I am in a hurry this morning."

He then left me and went on his errand. In a few minutes he returned, and I opened the door for him. As he entered, a respectably-dressed, common-looking man came up to him.

"Are you from Thompson's?" the stranger inquired.

"Yes, I am."

"There, take charge of that, then," he said, giving the old man a sheet of paper; "you know what to do with it."

"If I must I must, I suppose," said the old man, closing the door. He then went with his purchases into the kitchen, and I entered my sitting-room, where I was soon occupied with my morning paper.

I remained seated in my easy-chair for more than a quarter of an hour, but no breakfast made its appearance. I rang the bell, but no notice being taken of it, I got angry, and went to the head of the kitchen stairs to inquire the cause of the delay. I was preparing my voice to speak in as amiable a tone as possible, when I heard the cry of some one as in deep sorrow. The door of the kitchen was evidently closed, and the sound reached me but imperfectly, but still sufficiently clearly to show it was no common grief that caused it. Setting all idea of ceremony aside, I ran down stairs as quickly as I could, and opened the kitchen door, when a sight presented itself to me, that, accustomed as I am by my profession to scenes of misery, I never saw surpassed. The whole is now as perfect in my memory as it was the moment I saw it, so profound was the impression it made on me.

A miserable truckle-bed was placed against the wall opposite the fireplace. On it, ill, desperately ill from fever, and apparently dying, was the daughter who used to wait upon me. She was greatly altered, so much so that at the first glance I scarcely recognized her. She was ghastly pale, and appeared hardly conscious, but she was evidently trying to force her mind to understand what was passing around her.

On a chair before her was seated Mrs. Sandoy. She was weeping bitterly. The sorrow which oppressed her was evidently terrible, for reserved as she naturally was, she now wept aloud without the slightest restraint. She was so completely absorbed in it that she did not hear

me come into the kitchen, nor did she see me, for her face was buried in her hands. At her feet was lying the paper the stranger had placed in the old man's hands. The old man himself was stooping over some half-lighted coals at the bottom of the kitchen-grate, trying to make some water boil to cook the eggs for my breakfast. The tea was evidently already made, and the teapot was on the fender. I went to Mrs. Sandoy and placed my hand upon her shoulder. Feeling its pressure she took her hands from her face and immediately recognized me, but her grief for the moment took away the power of speech. The artificial smile she used to address me with had entirely vanished, and a look so imploring, so pathetic, supplied its place that it fairly went to my heart.

"Come, come, Mrs. Sandoy," I said, in my gentlest manner, "collect yourself, and let me know if I can assist you in any way. I will do it willingly, if it is in my power."

As I said this, perfect intelligence became visible in the countenance of the dying girl. She first cast a look of extreme affection on her weeping mother, and then, turning her eyes to me, she gave me a glance of intense gratitude. It was so sweet, so beautiful, the angel-spirit she was shortly to be seemed for a moment to inhabit her mortal frame to thank me for my charity. The mother now found words, but somewhat incoherently.

"What have I done that I must suffer so much?" she exclaimed. "I never wronged any one, and every one's hand is against me. I am broken-hearted, thoroughly broken-hearted," she continued, wringing her hands; "and not a soul in the world to help me. God grant me strength to support it, if it is only for the sake of that poor dear, or I shall sink under it."

Here she cast a look of intense love on her dying child, who had now relapsed into a state of exhaustion. Finding I had little hope of gaining the attention of the mother, I touched the old man on the arm, and beckoned to him to follow me up stairs into the parlor. He did so, and I then asked him for an explanation of what I had seen.

"Well, sir," he said, "it's a sad affair, altogether. You see things has gone on very bad with them for some time past. They were formerly very respectable; and the mistress is, as I am told, the widow of a captain in the army, at least I don't know it for myself, but I have heard it. I only know them since they have kept a lodging-house, but she's no more fit for it than I am for a tight-rope dancer. They are now thoroughly broken down. Three of her children have died since her husband's death, and the doctor says this one won't live till to-morrow, and then she'll only have one left."

"Where is the other child?" I inquired.

"She's governess in a ladies' school in the country; but bad luck's followed them there too. She was to have come up to London yesterday, and bring with her six months' pay, a matter of ten pounds. Well, instead of coming, she sends up a letter saying the mistress can't pay her, and is going to be a bankrupt, and she wants her mother to send her a post-office order for twenty shillings, to pay her fare up to town. Lord bless you! sir, she can't do it. The poor woman has not a shilling in the world she can call her own."

"Is she so very poor?"

"Dreadfully! why, I am in for a distress for the rent—she owes twelve months'; and this morning there comes in another for the Queen's taxes. They always hoped on, and got from bad to worse. They seemed to

have got a start when you came here, for the house was as full as it could hold. But then that poor girl got took ill with the fever, and the family in the first floor got frightened lest the children should catch it, and so they went off at a day's notice. Then the medical student bolted a good deal in their debt, then the law-writer went—he owed nothing. You are the only one that's kept true to her, but your money ain't much good to cover what she owes. I'm in for fifty pounds, besides the Queen's taxes, and they're six more."

"Who is the landlord?"

"I don't know, sir. He is a very rich man, and lives in the country. Our people received their orders from the solicitor who manages his estates."

"Do you know the solicitor's address?"

"Oh yes, sir; I can give it to you."

I took out my memorandum-book, and wrote down the address as the old man dictated.

"I suppose," I said, "these things will not be disturbed for a day or two?"

"Oh no, sir—not till the poor woman has somewhat got over her trouble. Our people ain't hard, at least for our line of business."

"You say the daughter in the country wants money to come up to town. Do you know her address?"

"Yes, sir, leastwise the letter is lying on the dresser, and I can easily get it."

"Well, then, there are a couple of sovereigns," I said; "I wish you would get a post-office order, and send her daughter down the twenty shillings. With the remainder get any thing they want below, till I come back in the evening." I put the money on the table. The old man looked at it with astonishment, but he said nothing, nor did he advance to take it.

"Why don't you take the money?" I said.

"Well, sir, I could hardly believe my eyes," he answered, "it's so seldom in our way of business we meet with any thing of the kind. I will do it, sir, honorably," he continued, clutching the money. "I would as soon rob a church as not lay out every farthing of it as you say."

He put the money in his pocket and was leaving the room.

"Stop," I said to him, "I want you to answer two questions more. Who put in the distress for the taxes?"

"Our people, sir; their house is in William street, and the name Thompson is on the shop-front."

"Where does the doctor live who attends the sick girl?"

"Close by, sir; you must pass the house as you go out; it's Dr. Jones."

I had noticed the house frequently in passing, and I now determined to call on him.

"Has he been kind to her?" I inquired.

"Very much so, sir; but, Lord bless you! it was of no use. He told her mother to give her plenty of wine and brandy, and keep her constitution well up. Where was she to get it from? She has not, as I said before, a shilling in the world of her own at this moment. She was obliged to borrow one of you this morning for your breakfast. She is a lady, and a true lady, too, but there isn't a pauper in the work-house poorer than she is. In another week or ten days she'll be there I suspect. Why, that poor girl will have to be buried by the parish if somebody don't befriend them; and I don't know nothing worse than that."

"Then the sick girl has positively wanted the medical necessaries required for her case?"

"She has indeed, sir; at any rate a good many of them."

"Brandy, among others?" I said, looking significantly at him.

He winced a little under my glance.

"Well, sir, there's no use shirking the question, she has had, from time to time, since I have been in the house, a little brandy. I hope you are not angry with her mother, sir," he continued. "It cost her a good deal, I can tell you, to do it. Your dog may be honest, but the honestest dog in the world will steal for her pups."

The butcher's man and the mongrel recurred to my mind at that moment. Could that fellow forgive and assist the brute, and I hold one thought of anger against the poor mother? I was angry with myself for the injustice I had done her in suspecting her sobriety. I owed her a retribution, and I that moment resolved to pay her. I took up my hat and stick.

"I shall not take my breakfast at home this morning," I said; "you can have it yourself if you please."

The man opened the street door for me, and I left the house. I had not proceeded many yards before the old man ran after me.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, in a hesitating manner; "but I am afraid I shall not be doing right by my employers to leave the house for the post-office order. Suppose I can't get in again? Not that I'm afraid of Mrs. Sandoy not acting honorable, but the poor creature is nearly beside herself."

"There is my latch-key; sit up for me till my return. I do not think I shall be late."

My first visit was to the doctor's. There I heard little I did not know before. The poor girl was evidently falling a prey to the fever through want of proper remedies. I then found out the broker's. The master received me with great civility. He told me the fact was the poor woman had no chance of success, and they wanted to get her out of the house. She could not pay her rent, nor was there the slightest probability she would ever be able to do so. The solicitors, he said, were highly respectable people, and I had better apply to them if I wished further information. With respect to the taxes they could not be held over any longer. I told him I would pay them immediately if he pleased. He told me he wanted nothing better, as he had a great dislike to be hard upon anybody. He then prepared the receipt, and I paid him the money, and he assured me the distress should be immediately raised.

I then went to my own solicitor's and laid the case before him. With the caution of a lawyer, he advised me to be very careful before I interfered further in the matter.

"You are not in possession of all the facts," he said; "to use an old proverb, you are pulling an old house over your head."

I told him I should consider any thing I advanced in the light of a loan.

"Your security, I am afraid, will be a bad one," he said, laughing.

"I am not so certain of that, Mr. Lawyer," I replied; "I have had a good deal to do with women in my time, and I know their psychology as well as most men. I have the highest respect for the integrity of women in money matters, if love or drink does not interfere to make them dishonest; my friend is too old for the first,

and I have already proof she is not likely to fall a victim to the latter. I thought otherwise, but I found I was mistaken."

"Then it appears, with all your skill and experience, you have been deceived in the latter point already. But admitting all you say to be true, she is a pauper, and, as far as you can see, there is no chance of her being any thing else, and therefore I hold her security to be as bad as possible."

"'It is a long lane that has no turning,' an old proverb says, and she may probably have a turn for the better yet."

"Granted, doctor; but when that time comes your claim may be barred by the statute of limitations."

"There is no statute of limitations for the integrity of an honorable woman, Mr. Lawyer."

"There is decidedly no use in arguing with a wilful man," he said, laughing. "If you will burn your fingers, you must; but as long as I am your legal adviser, you shall do it to the least possible extent. There is no occasion for you to pay the money. It will be enough if you offer to be security for the current year's rent. I know the solicitors, and there is not a more honorable firm in the profession, or one less likely to act in a grasping or cruel manner. When they know the facts, I am sure they will fall into the proposition. Besides," he said, relapsing again entirely into the lawyer, "they would be very foolish if they did not. If they save the amount of rent due by the sale of the furniture, that will not give them possession of the house. They must commence proceedings for an ejectment, and they may be somewhat tedious if the defendant pleases, and then, very possibly in this case, as in many others where a widow is upon the point of losing her cause, a husband

makes his appearance, whose address is at Aldgate Pump, or some other locality which nobody can find, and all has to begin over again."

I felt annoyed at the idea of my poor friend having a husband "turn up," as he called it, but I concealed my annoyance.

"Now," continued the lawyer, "I think I am in possession of your wishes, and, as I am very busy this morning, I trust you will excuse me, and imagine I have said, 'Go,' in as courteous phraseology as possible." I took this very unmistakable hint, and wished him good morning.

The remainder of the day I spent on business of my own. It occupied me till so late an hour, that before I had dined it was ten o'clock, and I then went, thoroughly tired, home. When I arrived I found the street door open and the old man on the step waiting for me. I was aware some intelligence must have reached him, he was so profoundly obsequious. He requested I would wait a moment while he lighted a candle. He was afraid I might hurt myself in the dark. I heard him in the sitting-room striking a lucifer, which evidently would not burn, expressing all the time his profound grief at keeping me waiting. At last he succeeded in lighting me into my room, with a grace worthy of the Hummum's, or any other second-class hotel. When I had entered, he closed the door in a most mysterious manner, and informed me that the distress for the Queen's taxes had been taken off.

I inquired if Mrs. Sandoy was aware of the fact.

"She was not," he said. "As he had not received my instructions about it, he thought it would be better not to mention it till he saw me."

I commended his discretion, and told him to keep it a

secret till I informed him. I then inquired after the post-office order. He had sent it as I had directed. He had also enclosed a note of his own, saying her sister was dangerously ill, and advising her to leave for London immediately. He told her also that, as her mother was too grieved to write, and as he was living in the house he had written the letter for her.

I complimented every thing he had done, and again requested he would keep all a secret from Mrs. Sandoy till I told him. I inquired if the daughter were still alive.

"Yes, sir; but she cannot live till morning."

"Do you think I can do any thing for her mother?"

"Nothing whatever, sir. She is so cut up I do not think she would know you."

"Well, I shall not want any thing more now, so good night." I then went into my bed-room, and, despite the misery I knew was beneath me, I soon fell asleep.

The next morning, on entering my sitting-room, I found the ragged, brown holland window-blind drawn down to its full extent, and a silence, the silence of death, was in the house. Accustomed as I am to death in all shapes, his presence in a dwelling-house, in the bosom of a private family, has something to me exceedingly awful in it. It excites a sensation which bids a man speak with bated breath, in a whisper. On no other occasion has death the same effect on me. I have stood, while yet almost a lad, in the midst of a vast French dissecting-room, with tables in a long row on each side, each having a corpse upon it, and a further supply heaped on each other in a corner. The sight elicited no regret nor abhorrence, nay, the jest and the laugh, and the promise to meet some fellow-student at a

ball the same evening, or a party of pleasure the next Sunday, went on perfectly unrestrainedly. I have seen death in a thousand duplicate copies on the field of battle, and stood in the midst of them with indifference. I have seen him in the pestilence in India, unfrightened, and even indifferent to the sight, while blackened corpses swelled and festered on every bed around me, the attendants being too terrified to remove them. When visiting a sick mother, I have removed the dead child from her breast, gently, it is true, but still only as an obstacle in my way. I have had the powerful soldier, when under my knife, droop forward his head and the next moment be a corpse. I felt sorry for the poor fellow, but no awe. Is it that death at home is more in accordance with the love for each other which God has implanted in our breasts, or is it that the sorrow of those loving the lost one is sympathetic, and enters our hearts without our knowledge or consent?

I rang the bell, and the old man made his appearance. Although he had evidently been weeping, and had scarcely recovered himself, he was even more profoundly obsequious to me than he was the evening before. He waited silently for me to speak.

"Is all over?" I inquired.

"Yes, sir, at five o'clock this morning, and a happy release it was. It was very sad though, for all that."

"Well, at any rate, it is over. How is Mrs. Sandoy?"

"Pretty nigh broken-hearted, sir; but it's no use attempting to comfort her, so I don't attempt it."

"Far better not. Of course, she has not money enough to bury her daughter?"

"With the exception of the money you left in my hands she has nothing in the world."

"Do you know a respectable undertaker near here?"

"Yes, sir." He gave me the address, and I wrote it down.

"I shall give him orders for the funeral," I said. "I am going out of town now for a week or ten days; but I will leave the money for my rent in advance with you, and while I am gone I hope you will see that Mrs. Sandoy wants nothing you can get her."

"I would willingly, sir, but I leave here to-day."

"Indeed, how is that?"

"The distraint for the rent, sir, has been removed; I received notice of it from my employer this morning."

"Where are you going to next?"

"I do not know, sir. I am afraid they've got no other job for me on hand."

"Have you any objection to remain here if I pay you?"

"None whatever, sir. On the contrary, I shall be very glad."

"Very well, then, remain. I dare say we shall not disagree about pay."

He smiled obsequiously, and evidently tried to make it appear that pecuniary compensation was an idea beneath him.

"Now get me pen and ink; but stop, does Mrs. Sandoy know that the distraints are removed?"

"No, sir; you told me not to mention it."

"Quite right; I shall not breakfast at home. Now go down stairs, and I will ring when I want you."

He then left me, and I wrote a note to Mrs. Sandoy, and enclosed in the envelope a five-pound note, which I requested she would accept as a gift, or consider it as a loan, as might be most grateful to her feelings. I then went into my bed-room, and having packed up my carpet-bag, I again rang for the old man.

"I am now going," I said; "I understand you will not leave till my return. There are a couple of sovereigns, get what you want, and account to me for them when I see you again. I shall call at the undertaker's as I go, and you will soon see him here I have no doubt. When I am gone, you can tell Mrs. Sandoy that the distraints are removed, and that she may expect her daughter to-day. Have you any suggestions to make?"

"None whatever, sir."

"Very well, then, get me a cab." As soon as he returned with it, he placed my carpet-bag in it, and when I was seated, he closed the door.

"Good morning," I said to him, as the cab was moving off. "Stop, give that note to Mrs. Sandoy." The cab then moved away.

I first went to the undertaker's: my interview with him was exceedingly short. I ordered a modest, inexpensive funeral, and made myself answerable for the cost, giving as a reference the address of my solicitor. I then went to the Brighton railway-station, and taking the train, remained by the sea-side for a fortnight.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DOCTOR'S WOOING—CONTINUED.

ALTHOUGH I greatly enjoyed my sojourn at Brighton, I must confess that my thoughts wandered frequently to my *protégées* in London. Nevertheless, I refrained from writing to them, or even indirectly inquiring after them, and as they did not know my address, I naturally heard nothing from them. At the end of a fortnight, I returned to town, giving no notice of my arrival. I reached home somewhat late. I had forgotten to take my latch-key from the old man, and I was, in consequence, obliged to knock at the door, a circumstance which somewhat annoyed me, as I did not feel well, and wished, if possible, to avoid an interview with the family that evening. The door was opened by a remarkably pretty young girl of perhaps eighteen years of age, dressed in simple, but deep mourning. I had no difficulty in recognizing her, for her mother's amiable expression and form of face were easily distinguishable in her. As I entered, she asked me if I wished to see the apartments, but I told her I was already a tenant. She immediately understood me, and hastened to light me into my sitting-room. She told me she was very sorry her mother was not at home to receive me, but that she had gone out on some commission with the old man. I replied that it was unimportant, as I was tired, and not very well; and, as I should not want any thing more that night, I should go to bed at once. She again regretted the absence of her mother, who would be

much vexed at not seeing me; but as I made no remark, she left me.

The next morning was to be one of trial, I thought, but it passed off more smoothly than I had anticipated. I hesitated some little time before leaving my room, as I felt somewhat nervous, why, I know not, unless it was from the extreme aversion I have to a woman's thanking me for any good office I may have done her. However, it was useless delaying, as the meeting must take place, so I went into my sitting-room and rang my bell, hoping the old man would make his appearance, as I could then obtain from him all the information I required. I was mistaken; it was my landlady herself who answered my summons. Her face was ashy pale, and bore on it all the traces of recent intense grief. She was neatly dressed in mourning, and, in that respect looked better than I had ever seen her as hitherto, doubtless from her various household duties, she had had but little opportunity to pay attention to her toilet. She came into the room evidently prepared to express the gratitude she felt, but when in my presence she could not utter a word. Two or three attempts that she made failed, and feeling her inability to speak, she raised her trembling hand to her face, not to wipe away the tears which were fast gathering in her eyes, but actuated by a feeling peculiar to some women in subduing strong emotion, to conceal the quivering of the under lip. I was the first to break silence. Patting her on the shoulder (it is a bad habit I have got when I wish to console any one in trouble), I merely said, "Mrs. Sandoy, I am in a great hurry this morning; you would oblige me by letting me have my breakfast as quickly as possible." With a woman's intuitive quickness she understood me, and casting one look in my face she left the room.

If the absurd doctrines of some on the occult sympathy existing between human beings were somewhat smoothed down, and the equally absurd ideas of others, that such sympathies do not exist, were done away with, a most beautiful and interesting study would open itself to the psychologist.

Short as had been my interview with my landlady, and silent as we had remained, a most interesting conversation, perfectly understood by both, had been carried on between us. She had told me eloquently her extreme gratitude for the kindness I had shown her, and had assured me it would never be forgotten; while I, on my part, had informed her that what I had done on her behalf had repaid itself already; that I was perfectly well aware of her gratitude, but that I objected to receive any thanks; and that I sincerely wished prosperity and happiness might be hers for the future.

When my breakfast made its appearance, it was brought into the room by the pretty bright-eyed girl I had seen the evening before. She placed every thing handily on the table, although it was easy to perceive she had been but a short time accustomed to a duty of the kind. When all was ready, I requested she would send me up the old man. When he entered the room, he wore on his face the expression of one who has conscientiously fulfilled a delicate and difficult task, and was about to receive the amount of praise due to him for his diligence. I found from him that every thing had taken place just as I had wished it: that the funeral had been conducted in a quiet, decent manner; that the mother and daughter had both followed the corpse of their lost relative to the grave; that the girl was a quick, good-tempered creature, indefatigable in her exertions to assist her mother; that the first floor and upper part of

the house had been let for six months at least, to a highly respectable family, who paid liberally for the accommodation, and would enter on possession the next week; and, to conclude, that the old man himself had been engaged by them for a continuance, to clean boots and shoes, to run errands, and, in a word, to make himself generally useful. He then gave me an account of his expenditure, after which I remunerated him for his exertions to his perfect satisfaction.

During the next week every thing went on smoothly. The new lodgers took possession of their apartments, and the debt I had incurred in becoming security for the current rent was now, in spite of the prognostication of my solicitor to the contrary, a mere matter of form. Mrs. Sandoy and her daughter, I need hardly say, attended to my every want in the most assiduous manner. We became more intimate. I discovered that Mrs. Sandoy was, as the old man had told me, the widow of a captain in the army, who had sold his commission a few years before his death, and had left his wife and children utterly penniless. Her mother had married a second time to a crabbed old man, a builder of considerable wealth, but she had had no family by her second husband. Mrs. Sandoy, after the death of her husband, had resided with her father-in-law. Her mother soon afterwards died, but she continued still in the house, acting as the old man's house-keeper.

I also gradually found out that a certain fine young man I had seen in the evening more than once was the accepted lover of the daughter Mary. Unfortunately there was little chance of their union speedily taking place. She of course had nothing, and he was only an under clerk in a respectable solicitor's office. His father had been a solicitor in good practice, and had given his

son an excellent education, but misfortune had come upon the old man, and he was now one of the poor brethren in the Charter House. If there appeared but little chance of their speedy union to the cool, calculating eye of the old doctor, Love completely blinded the young couple to the fact, and persuaded them that that which appeared to all others as almost hopeless was a point comparatively easy for them to attain.

Things now appeared to be going on prosperously enough, but my poor landlady seemed to be one of those whom misfortune especially chooses for her own. I understood she had been complaining for two or three days of not feeling very well, and one morning Mary asked me to see her mother.

"I know she will be angry with me," she said, "for troubling you, but I am sure mamma is far from well, although she will not own it."

I readily promised to see her mother, and to my great sorrow I found the diagnosis of severe fever upon her. I immediately ordered her to remain in bed, to which she strongly objected.

"How is the house to go on without me?" she said. "Mary will exert herself too much, I feel persuaded, and if she fell ill it would break my heart." I was inexorable, however, and Mrs. Sandoy was obliged to take to her bed. I determined to attend to the case myself, and resolved that she at least should not fall a victim to the disease for want of proper medical applications.

The fever ran on, and it was about as severe a case as I was ever called upon to treat. Fortunately, every attention she required was at hand, and nothing could exceed the incessant care and solicitude of her daughter Mary; and the anxiety of her doctor was as great as if the invalid had been his own sister. Another unfortu-

nate circumstance now occurred. The family who occupied the lodgings hearing that fever was in the house declined to remain in it. They, however, when they left, liberally paid a month's rent in advance, and that made things better than they might have been.

The fever now changed to a typhoid form, and delirium set in. Incessantly was the daughter required at the bedside of the mother, and unceasingly was the excellent girl at her post. One night when I was asleep I was awoke by Mary hastily tapping at my door, and begging that I would get up to see her mother, who was so much worse she was quite alarmed. I arose, and having hastily dressed myself, I went up to Mrs. Sandoy's bedroom. Here I found the delirium had increased to such an extent that Mary was afraid her mother would rise from her bed, and that she should be unable to control her. She also said her mother was talking in the wildest and most incoherent manner. One moment she was in alarm about the rent, the next she was expecting a visit from one of the royal family. Then some gentleman was coming to take her lodgings and she should not be ready to receive him; she must get up and prepare things for him. Every moment she changed the subject of the wild thoughts which were passing through her brain. "Why did not Mary arrive?. There was nothing to detain her. Was I sure she was well? Would I go to Sir Walter Stirling's and insist on him to send? Why did he not come? There was something wrong she was sure." She then appeared to forget her poor girl was dead, and called her repeatedly, and appeared irritated she did not come.

I stayed with her for more than an hour. At last nature seemed almost exhausted, and after a little time she appeared likely to sleep. I then went below, telling

Mary to call me again without fail should the paroxysm return. I was soon in bed, but I found it impossible to sleep. I was, I admit, most anxious about the termination of my patient's case, and I lay turning over in my mind the probable changes in her favor, and what remedies I could use to assist them. My thoughts then reverted to the state of her mind, and that led to divers medical speculations on the action that delirium had on the brain. I remembered a case I had read of in an old German book—by the by, I believe Schiller mentions it somewhere—about an old Lithuanian peasant, whose wife imagined him to be possessed of a devil. The poor fellow had been attacked by fever, and delirium had followed. During the paroxysms he was incessantly speaking in a language no one could understand; but one old lady had sufficient learning to know it was the language ordinarily employed in the dominions of Satan, and the curate of the parish was immediately sent for to exorcise the spirit. When he arrived, he refused to commence operations unless he had some reasonable proof of the fiend's presence. The sick man did not leave him long in doubt, but began gabbling away faster than ever. The old priest was thunderstruck. His classical knowledge had greatly faded since he was ordained, but still he had sufficient left to know that the sick man was repeating the first chapter of the gospel of St. John in Greek. The wife was immediately questioned whether her husband was a man of any education. He received for answer, that he could not write his name, nor did he know one letter from another. The sick man recommenced his gabbering, and the old priest listened even more attentively than before. "No, no, he was not mistaken; it was Greek sure enough."

The poor priest was somewhat puzzled what to do.

How to account for the man's knowledge of Greek was impossible, but, at the same time, had he been under the dominion of Satan at the moment, the gospel of St. John would certainly not have been the text-book chosen. The priest, however, got out of the difficulty as he best could, and in time the old peasant recovered. He was now seriously taken to task by the priest, who openly accused him of "shamming stupid." The peasant indignantly denied the accusation, and maintained that his stupidity was as honestly his own as his reverence's learning belonged to him. The priest, however, was pertinacious, and inquired into the history of the man's life. In it he discovered that half a century before, the peasant, then about sixteen years of age, had been a servant in the establishment of a professor of the University of Bonn. It was then the custom when a scholar was removed from the lowest class into the one above it, for him to translate and repeat by heart the first chapter of St. John in Greek. By continually hearing it recited, at last it took root upon the servant's memory, without in the least understanding its meaning, and it afterwards faded till the delirium restored it. Other cases of the kind then came before me, but less and less vividly, till at last I fell fast asleep.

The next morning I certainly found my patient calmer, but with no material improvement. In the afternoon delirium again came on. Fortunately, my anxiety had prevented me from leaving the house that day, and I was present and could assist Mary. The sentences were of the same incoherent description as the evening before, but the words "Sir Walter Stirling must send it back; he has no right to keep it," were repeated more than once. I asked Mary whether her mother had ever been acquainted with Sir Walter Stirling.

"Never; she had never even heard his name before."

In the evening Mary's lover called. In the description I gave to his anxious inquiries as to the state of Mrs. Sandoy's health, I mentioned to him the singular fact of her having mentioned Sir Walter Stirling's name so frequently and yet to have had no acquaintance with him.

"Sir Walter Stirling," he said, smiling sadly, "was not of a profession with which Mrs. Sandoy has had much communication."

"Who was he?" I inquired.

"He was a banker, and failed many years ago. It was before my time, but I have heard my father speak of him."

"But are you certain there was no acquaintance nor business transaction she might have had with the banker? I think it very probable there might have been." I then related to him the story of the Lithuanian peasant, and other cases where the memory had been renewed by mania. I questioned Mary, but she knew of no acquaintance whatever between them, and the conversation shortly afterwards dropped, as Theodore (Mary's lover) had promised to spend the evening with his father at the Charter House.

During the next twenty-four hours the state of Mrs. Sandoy's health did not improve, yet with the exception of the continual strain on her constitution she was no worse. Theodore joined us again late the next evening, and I could easily see by his eyes he had some news for us.

After he had left us the evening before, he had proceeded direct to his father's. "In the course of conversation I mentioned to my father," he said, "the frequent use Mrs. Sandoy had made of Sir Walter Stirling's

name, and the different anecdotes you had related to me. My father has an intimate friend, also an inmate of the Charter House, whose brother had formerly been one of the principal clerks in Stirling's bank, and had also been occupied in winding up the concern. Afterwards he had accepted an appointment in a joint-stock bank, where he had remained till he retired on a pension. My father promised to make inquiries of him to-day and let me know the result. I have just left him. He told me that he and his friend had called this morning on the retired cashier, who remembered nothing of any one of the name of Sandoy as connected directly or indirectly with the bank. They had had a good deal of trouble with an old builder of the name of Norman, who had lodged some papers or deeds with them as a collateral security for some temporary loan he had required. The money had been repaid, and all the documents but one returned, but that one had by some accident been mislaid. He did not know how the affair terminated, as he had accepted another appointment before the winding up was thoroughly completed."

"But grandpapa's name was Gorman, and not Norman," said Mary.

"Still," said Theodore, "it is very possible that the cashier, from the distance of time, may have mistaken it. However, I asked my father to call on him again to-morrow and get further information from him if possible."

"O Theodore!" said Mary, "I am very sorry you should give your father so much trouble about it. It can lead to nothing."

"Very possibly; but then we shall be no worse off than we are now. I have heard you say that your mother always considered herself well provided for before your grandfather's death."

"That is perfectly true, but he died without a will, and she received nothing but two hundred pounds the heir-at-law gave her. It was not very generous, considering the fine fortune he inherited."

"But for all that," said Theodore, "he might have left his will with his banker. Though, by the by, wills are not exactly the sureties that bankers are apt to lend money upon. At the same time, inquiries can do no harm, and I am determined to go on with them."

I complimented the young fellow on his determination, and encouraged him to go on with the search which he promised to do. Shortly afterwards, he said he was obliged to leave us, and Mary went down stairs with him to let him out, while I remained on guard in the sick-room. I must say she was longer in bidding him good-bye than I should have been; but, poor child, she had a good excuse.

That night I sat up with the invalid for some hours, to allow Mary some rest, on whom incessant watching was beginning to have a most prejudicial effect. So pallid had she lately become, that I determined the next day to find some good nurse to assist her, or otherwise she too might fall a victim to the unaccustomed fatigue she was then experiencing. My patient was now quite quiet and I had ample time for reflection. I do not know what encouraged me to hope that something advantageous might turn out from the exertions of the young man in discovering what relation had formerly existed between the old builder and the banker. A will could be the only thing that could be at all serviceable to Mrs. Sandoy; but, as Theodore had stated, it was not the security a banker would advance money upon. Any other document might turn out to the advantage of the heir-at-law, but certainly could not benefit my poor

patient. With respect to her future, I had certainly great reason to fear; but the same unreasoning hope which induced me to think that some benefit might accrue from investigating the old builder's claim on the insolvent banker buoyed me up to think that she would recover. As I said before, her case was one of the most severe I had ever attended. With any other patient I should certainly have thought it my duty to have warned her friends of the probable, or rather almost certain, fatal termination of the disease; but now, without cause, I looked upon the case as certain of recovery, and I began to frame in my mind questions respecting Sir Walter Stirling, which I should put to her when she was sufficiently well to answer them. About two o'clock in the morning, Mary came to my relief, and I sought my bed, thoroughly tired out.

I found the next morning my patient much in the same state, but Mary's face showed such unmistakable signs of exhaustion, and the effects of the unwholesome atmosphere of a sick-room, that, immediately after breakfast, I started off to St. George's hospital and requested the matron, if possible, to find me a nurse. Fortunately, I found one at the moment applying to her for a situation. She was a heavy-looking old woman with a good-natured expression of countenance, and it was also without that characteristic of her profession—the traces of gin upon it. I hired her on the condition that her recommendation should suit me. She immediately gave me the name of a medical man in the neighborhood who knew her, and I determined to call on him on my way home. I told her if she were certain that her character would suit, she had better go home at once and get her wardrobe (or bundle perhaps, would be the more correct term) ready, and I would call for her as

soon as I had got her character. I found she was sober and honest, and, as with the generality of nurses of the Mrs. Gamp school, it is better to inquire no further into character, I resolved to engage her. An hour afterwards she was on duty, and poor Mary, in spite of her remonstrances, sent to her bed.

Theodore called in the evening. His father had again seen the ex-cashier, who acknowledged the mistake he had made in the name. He now perfectly remembered it was Gorman. He had also given Theodore's father the name of the solicitors of the assignees, and a note to a friend who had formerly been head clerk to the firm. I took from Theodore the name of the solicitors, and I encouraged the young fellow to go on with the investigation. I resolved, also, to call on my own solicitors and ask them to interest themselves, if possible, in the affair.

The next morning found me in their office. My solicitor knew the firm perfectly well, one of his partners having been an articled clerk in the house at the time of the bankruptcy. Beyond that they were people of high respectability, and he had frequent transactions with them. He had no doubt they would render me every possible assistance, although he did not believe the slightest good could come from it. The partner who had served his time in the firm now joined us, and I found he was also of opinion that it would be simply a loss of time to take any trouble about it. He perfectly remembered the circumstance; and his opinion was, that whatever the document might have been, it was now irrecoverably lost. Without the slightest reason on my side for differing in opinion with them, I took a totally different view of the affair, and I told them as much.

"Have your own way," said my legal friend, "if you please. I will write to the firm to-day, and ask permission for you, or rather your attorney, to inspect what old papers they have bearing on the business, with a view of finding the one you want; and you will have the satisfaction of paying for it without the slightest possible advantage accruing from the search."

With this pleasing understanding I left him. The same evening, I received a communication from him, informing me that already an answer had been received from the solicitors for the assignees, offering every assistance in their power to find the missing document, but at the same time they could not hold out any prospect of success. From the length of time which had expired since the transaction, the papers had got dispersed; and they found, by their books, that an application had formerly been made by a Mr. Gorman, which had proved unsuccessful.

I had hardly finished reading the letter when Theodore came in. His father had succeeded in finding the address of the old managing clerk, who had promised to assist us if we were determined again to move in the affair. I requested him to ask his father to call on the clerk early in the morning, and get him to meet me at the office of my solicitor at noon the next day. He immediately left us, and I spent the evening with Mary and the nurse in the invalid's room. Her health, I regret to say, did not improve. If the fever had not increased, it had certainly not diminished; and, in the mean time, the constitution of my patient was evidently suffering severely, and I began to look forward with great anxiety to the crisis, which would probably not arrive for a week or ten days.

The next morning, on leaving home for my solicitor's

office, I felt for the first time dispirited. I, now that the termination was evidently near at hand, felt how utterly improbable was the hope of any ultimate success accruing out of the transaction, and I almost blamed myself for entering into it. It was another proof of an innate weakness in my character, that a strong wish for a thing to occur was to me a *prima facie* proof of the possibility of its occurrence. This habit was strengthened by a somewhat treacherous tendency of my memory, which, when I was resolving on any act, invariably brought forward instances of success, omitting the very numerous cases of failure. That morning, however, memory reversed the usual order of her behavior, and showed me how many times I had made myself ridiculous in attempting to compass impossibilities, and omitted to mention those cases in which I had succeeded. This unfortunate frame of mind had such an effect upon me, that, when I arrived at the office, I felt so completely ashamed of myself, that I hesitated some time before the door, before I could summon up sufficient courage to enter. At last I accomplished it, and I found not only my solicitor waiting for me, but the old managing clerk as well.

We immediately started off for the office of the assignees' solicitors. The distance was a short one, but it was to me intensely disagreeable. There seemed a sort of tacit understanding with the other two, that I was making a simpleton of myself, but I somewhat consoled myself with the idea that I was a free-born Briton, and had a right to make a fool of myself if I chose.

Immediately on our arrival, we were ushered into a sort of waste upper room, in which a large deal box, labelled "Sir Walter Stirling's assignees," had been placed. A sort of office-boy, a lad about sixteen years

of age, attended us. The box, on being opened, was found to contain a number of law-papers and parcels of deeds, each tied up in brown paper and labelled. We examined each separately, as we took it out and read on the outside the names of the papers each parcel contained. When we got to the bottom of the box, we had found nothing that could help us. It was proposed that we should replace the papers, but I insisted that each should be opened separately. My lawyer shrugged his shoulders, and the old managing clerk smiled. We proceeded with our task, but without success. As each paper was opened, we gave it to the lad, who tied it up, and then replaced it in the box.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, when I had given him one to tie up, "but this feels as if there were another inside of it." So saying, he opened it before us. We looked on indifferently at first, but my interest in it was soon vastly increased, for my eyes caught the words "Gorman" and "settlement." I snatched it hastily from the lad's hands. The apathy of my companions vanished, and they were soon as excited in the subject as I was myself. On opening the document, we found it was a deed of settlement the old man had made on his wife, and on which he retained a life interest. At his death, the property was to go to his wife's daughter, Mrs. Sandoy. It did not appear at first sight very valuable. The property consisted of fourteen acres of land in Surrey. We took down in pencil the description of the place, the date, the names of the trustees and witnesses, and then, having descended into the office we left the settlement in the hands of one of the partners.

We now began to inquire where the property was situated. We found it was a short distance from Lon-

don, in the immediate vicinity of one of the large railway stations. We felt assured that this circumstance must have greatly increased its value, but, at the moment, we could not go deeper into the matter. I then somewhat prematurely commissioned my solicitor to act for Mrs. Sandoy; and, after requesting the old managing clerk to accept a fee for the trouble he had taken, and which, to my great surprise, he refused, I returned home.

That evening Theodore called on us, without having first called at the Charter House. He seemed most anxious to know the result of our investigations, and yet he was afraid to ask, so certain did the fact of our non-success appear. I saved him the trouble of making the inquiry by taking him and Mary into another room, and informing them of the events of the day. He appeared, as naturally might have been expected, perfectly astonished. I was immediately asked by him and Mary a thousand questions, more than nine-tenths of which were perfectly unanswerable. Afterwards, we went into Mrs. Sandoy's bed-room, where the conversation, in spite of our resolution to the contrary, was from time to time renewed. My patient was still delirious, but it was painful to witness her struggle to force her mind into a sane state on hearing, as she did more than once, the name of Sir Walter Stirling mentioned. I thought it better, on noticing this, to warn my young friends not again to mention his name in her presence.

We then went below, leaving Mrs. Sandoy in charge of the nurse, and we continued our conversation without interruption till nearly two o'clock in the morning, making every possible arrangement for future expenditure, as completely as if the money were already in our possession. It would be wrong to imagine that Theodore took

leave of us, for I was fairly obliged to turn him out of the house.

It would be too tedious to go through the whole of the circumstances by which we proved Mrs. Sandoy's title to the settlement; suffice it to say, not only the trustee (who, by the by, had been appointed without his knowledge by the eccentric old man) was alive, but the witnesses to the transaction as well. The property which at his death might have been worth a couple of hundreds a year, was now of far greater value. The old man had purchased the ground as admirably adapted for a building speculation, but since his death, a railway station in its vicinity had so improved its value, that it now returned, in ground-rents alone, more than £1,400 a year. The solicitor of the heir-at-law, after many demurs, was obliged to admit that the security appeared valid, still he considered that counsel's opinion should be taken upon certain points, and generally, in the interest of his clients, threw every impediment in the way of a settlement. At last, the affair was concluded, subject to the consent of Mrs. Sandoy, when she should be sufficiently recovered to have the subject brought before her. All arrears of interest were to be waived, and the estate, as it then stood, was to be made over to her.

But the most terrible task was yet to be completed. The fever was evidently close upon its crisis, and its victim was reduced almost to a skeleton. She still continued delirious. The old nurse was kind and attentive, and Mary was indefatigable, so little was to be feared for her from lack of attention, still we had great cause to dread the result.

A week passed and the crisis was over. Mrs. Sandoy was freed from delirium as the fever had left her, but she was so weak it was doubtful whether the vital energy

which still remained in her was strong enough to restore her to health. What I most dreaded was, the shock to the nervous system the news of her inheritance would create if she heard it without caution. To avoid this I particularly warned the nurse on the subject. I told her not to let one hint, nor one word drop, which would be likely to call her mistress's attention to the subject. Mary I had already cautioned. She fully understood the necessity of silence, and promised to obey me; for myself there was of course no danger. There was some little difficulty, however, to carry out our wishes. Mrs. Sandoy, as soon as she found her strength increase, began to be excessively anxious about letting her apartments, and it required no little tact to form excuses sufficiently plausible to calm her.

She was progressing rapidly, when one night Mary met me at the door, and, with tears in her eyes, informed me her mother was much worse. I rushed up stairs and found her again in a state of delirium and in a high fever. It appeared, upon inquiry, that, while Mary was absent from the room, a conversation had taken place between Mrs. Sandoy and the nurse, which originated in the former asking if many people came to see the apartments. The poor old woman made a clumsy reply which aroused the curiosity of the patient, and she pressed her upon the point. The old woman at last became so confused, that Mrs. Sandoy insisted upon an explanation, and then, with many demands of secresy, she told her patient all, or at least as much as she knew of the matter, and the result was a terrible relapse.

For days did she hang between life and death, but, thanks to an excellent constitution, at last she showed signs of recovery. But a peculiarity appeared in her convalescence which frightened those not well acquainted

with the occasional results of severe attacks of fever attended with protracted delirium—her mind appeared affected. Among other peculiarities, she took an extraordinary aversion to her daughter Mary, so much so, that on more than one occasion she was heard to threaten that, as soon as she was strong enough to leave her bed, she would kill her. The poor girl was at first dreadfully distressed at this unfortunate feeling of her mother against her, but I told her I was perfectly sure with time it would subside, which somewhat calmed her. To conclude, Mrs. Sandoy recovered strength of body more rapidly than her mind returned to its normal state, so I judged it would be better to place her for a short time under restraint. As she willingly obeyed whatever I proposed, I sent her, under the care of a female friend of my own, to the Shirley Hall asylum.

She remained here, continued Dr. Meadows, for six months. Her health and strength, both of body and mind, returned rapidly. She was beloved by all who resided here at the time, and when she left us it was a day of mourning for us all.

About three months after she had quitted the asylum, I received a letter containing wedding-cards from Dr. and Mrs. Tyler, which, I must say, surprised me greatly. However, sure enough, Tyler had married her, and, although neither of them are very young, I believe a happier couple it would be impossible to find. He has an income of his own of at least six hundred a year, and that added to her handsome income, allows them not only to live in ease but in affluence. They have a very handsome place near Hastings. Heaven has, to a certain extent, compensated her for the loss of her child, by her daughter Mary, who has married Theodore, presenting her with a granddaughter, and there is every probability

of her being again equally generous. Theodore soon left the attorney's office, and entered himself as a law student in Lincoln's Inn. Lastly, the old broker's man received a small pension from Mrs. Sandoy, which contributes most conveniently to the small emoluments of his unpleasant profession.

CHAPTER IX.

STORY OF A CLERGYMAN WHO APPLIED TO THE DEVIL FOR CONSOLATION AND RECEIVED IT—AND THE RESULTS.

THE next case I shall introduce to the reader's notice is that of the clergyman whom I found at the dinner-table the day of my arrival at the asylum. He was a most gentlemanly, amiable man, and, of all those cases which came under my notice during the time I was under the care of Dr. Meadows, there was not one more worthy of sympathy than his, and possibly none so terrible. I had the pleasure of his intimate acquaintance during his residence among us, and when he was reported so perfectly cured as to be able to leave the asylum, it was almost with tears of sorrow that I heard the intelligence. There was a remarkable feature in his case which differed from those of all the other inmates—he acknowledged the justice of his having been placed under restraint, nay, more, it was done at his own special desire.

But while admitting the necessity of his being placed under control, he never spoke about his malady, and it was through the doctor that I heard the particulars of his case. He is now dead, and very probably forgotten, but, as his history may be a warning to others, I will run the risk of a charge of indiscretion, and narrate it as closely as possible, in the manner it was narrated to me.

Mr. Beauchamp was the younger son of a gentleman of fortune, residing in one of the midland counties.

When a boy, he had been educated at Harrow, and he afterwards entered as an under-graduate at —— Hall, Oxford. He was then a remarkably handsome, fine-grown young man. He was intelligent, bold, active, and generous, perhaps a mean or ignoble thought never crossed his mind. He was nearly twenty years of age before his profession was decided on. He earnestly wished to enter the army, for which he was admirably adapted, but a relative of his mother's having a valuable living in his gift, it was decided he should enter the church.

Mr. Beauchamp pleaded earnestly against the decision, but without effect. His father, a domestic tyrant in his way, would not alter his determination, and in due time his son was ordained. As a curate his behavior was unexceptionable, and after he had been in that capacity for three years, the living to which he had been promised the appointment became vacant by the death of the incumbent. After he had been a year in possession he married a young lady, a member of a noble family, who, though not wealthy, was amiable and handsome, and admirably adapted as the wife of the energetic, kind-hearted, wealthy clergyman. The fruit of their union was an only son. His mother loved and spoiled him, and his father's affection was carried to such an extent as to be little less prejudicial.

Time passed on. Mr. Beauchamp was much liked by the large majority of his parishioners. He was charitable, good-tempered, affable, and humane, and if his sermons were not of any particular excellence in point of composition or delivery, his hospitality, which was most liberal, and his kindness, which appeared inexhaustible, compensated, in the minds of a large proportion of his congregation, for any little defects they might perceive

in his theology or delivery. It is true that, in his parish, there were not wanting those who differed with him on doctrinal points, but they were either those who were omitted by Mrs. Beauchamp in her invitations to dinner at the rectory, or dissenters, a few of whom resided in the neighborhood.

The boy grew apace, and the love of his parents for him increased with his years. Unfortunately for the welfare of the child himself, as well as the probable future happiness of his parents, the love they bore him arrived at a point little less than idolatry. The mother absolutely spoiled him, and though his father's affection was somewhat more discreet, he too frequently gave way to his wife when he should have shown more determination.

The time at last arrived for the boy to be sent to school, but his unthinking mother set her face against the proposition. Her husband, it is true, argued against her, and strongly attempted to carry his point; for, notwithstanding his wish to please his wife and child, he was perfectly well aware of the necessity of attending to the lad's education. Mrs. Beauchamp, when she found her reasoning powers fail against the just, common-sense arguments of her husband, brought forward a champion in her behalf whom Mr. Beauchamp had not the courage to oppose. She had prompted the village Esculapius to give an opinion that the child had weak lungs, and that in order to save his life it was necessary that he should remain at least a year longer at home. The poor doctor had some little difficulty in making up his mind to perpetrate the fiction, but Mrs. Beauchamp was an excellent patient, and he smoothed his conscience by looking at his large family, and thinking that the sin he perpetrated was for their interest.

The doctor's opinion decided the question, and Mrs. Beauchamp had her own way. At the end of the year, the boy's constitution was again pronounced by the same unprejudiced medical testimony to be still in a most delicate condition, although how this time the doctor could have brought his conscience to commit such an act it is difficult to imagine, for a more robust or healthy-looking child it would have been difficult to meet. His opinion, however, carried full weight with it, and the boy remained another year at home, his education the while being utterly neglected. Though the father was certainly to blame for this neglect, he was not altogether without excuse, for, on all his attempts to teach the child, if a single tear made its appearance, the mother was certain to interpose, and the lesson finished. If the boy's health increased by this most injudicious system, which is extremely problematical, his manners certainly deteriorated in greater proportion. He was rude, passionate, and self-willed, but good-hearted, forgiving, affectionate, and generous.

He was now nearly fifteen years of age, the pride and darling of his father, and the idol of his mother. Both over-indulged him. Any whim he conceived, his parents immediately granted him. The youth was fond of all athletic exercises, and his father, whose predilections for a soldier's life were not altogether extinct, humored him in every thing which was bold and manly. He allowed him a horse and a gun, and the lad was soon an excellent rider, and a good shot. He used frequently to follow the hounds, and he was an immense favorite with all the fox-hunting farmers in the neighborhood.

The lad at last reached his seventeenth year, and then his mother was obliged to yield, and admit the necessity of his education being attended to. Even the village

doctor had not the courage any longer to give an opinion to the contrary. But perhaps the weight which really turned the scale was the decision of the lad himself, who had sense enough to perceive his own inferiority in point of education, with other young gentlemen of his own age. The father of course readily gave his consent to that which his conscience told him ought to have been done long since, and the young gentleman was forthwith sent to his father's old school, Harrow.

For some time after his admission into the school he led a very unhappy life, not as is, or rather was usual, from being bullied by the other boys, for he was a remarkably powerful, active, and resolute lad, but his education had been so neglected that he was the jest and ridicule of others, scarcely two-thirds his age. He was nevertheless much liked out of school, for his bold and generous behavior, still his inferiority in literary attainments was to him a source of intense annoyance. At this school he remained, learning little but making himself a great favorite with all.

Shortly after his son had been entered at Harrow, Mr. Beauchamp received a large and totally unexpected addition to his fortune by the death of a distant relative, who left him a freehold estate of considerable value. His hospitality, which had been liberal before, now became unbounded; it was his favorite failing, if that be the proper term for it, and he indulged in it to his heart's content. He almost kept open house for the more respectable of his parishioners, and was of course a great favorite with them in return. Unfortunately in time he acquired a reputation for a somewhat too extended love of conviviality, but then even the most opposed to him were unable to quote a single instance in which he had overstepped the bounds of perfect sobriety, or had in

the slightest manner conducted himself in a way unworthy of a perfect gentleman.

The principal part of the spiritual duties of his parish were zealously performed by his two curates; the practice of charity and the exercise of good works were incessantly performed by himself. He was, perhaps, on the whole, as happy a man as any in the county, and certainly no man had greater reason to be content with his lot.

The time had now arrived for his son to leave school, and for Mr. Beauchamp to decide on his future career. Remembering, perhaps, too well the bitter disappointment his own father had caused him, by refusing to allow him to choose, or having even a voice in the choice of his own profession, Mr. Beauchamp determined on consulting the wish of his son on the occasion, and if possible, and prudent, to carry it out. With this intent, he wrote to his son to meet him at the Chapter Coffee-house, in St. Paul's Churchyard, which was then the habitual residence of the country clergy when in London. He left home the next day, and almost as soon as he had established himself in the coffee-room of the hotel in town, his son, whom he had not seen for six months, entered. At the lad's age, a few months frequently make a great difference in his personal appearance. They had done so on this occasion. The overgrown, somewhat clumsy boy, Mr. Beauchamp had last seen him, was now changed into the handsome and elegant youth. The father's pride was easily seen through the habitual Englishman's attempt to conceal his feelings. There was full cause for his pride. A nobler, handsomer, or more elegant young man, it would have been difficult to meet with. In a few moments the father was fully master of his feelings, and in a short time he and his

son were comfortably seated at breakfast together. Presently the business of the day commenced, and the father heard with ill-concealed joy his son choose the profession which he, when a lad, had so ardently wished for.

It now remained for Mr. Beauchamp to find out what patronage he could bring to bear on the subject of getting his son a commission, as well as determining what arm of the service he was best adapted for. The engineers and artillery were soon negatived. Handsome as his son was, and naturally intelligent, there was no disguising the fact, his education was lamentably deficient for either service. In the Guards he had little interest. He had a natural objection to the infantry of the line, not from any want of respect for that noble branch of the service, but he considered that, as an only son, it would be a great source of happiness both to himself and his wife to have him near them in England. At last Mr. Beauchamp resolved on calling on a friend and neighbor of his who was at that moment stopping in London, and whose brother was a colonel in the Life Guards. He was received most cordially. His friend, after hearing the object of Mr. Beauchamp's visit, told him his brother the colonel was then on duty at Knightsbridge, and he should have much pleasure in immediately going thither and introducing them to him. The offer was gratefully accepted, and half an hour afterwards all three found themselves in the colonel's room at Knightsbridge. He listened to Mr. Beauchamp's explanation of his views with much attention, and when he had finished said:

"Have you any interest at the Horse Guards? If you have, make an application for a cornetcy in our regiment, and I will back you with what little influence I have.

It is not much, but such as it is, it is at your service. I like getting a well-bred, strapping lad with us, fresh from school. They are always easier broke in, and in the end make better soldiers. How old are you?"

"Eighteen," was the reply of young Beauchamp, at the same time blushing and showing some annoyance at the mention of the school. The colonel perceived it, and said, laughing:

"Do not be angry at my talking about your school; when you are as old as I am, you will think that your present age is rather an advantage than otherwise."

The colonel afterwards conducted them round the barracks, and the lad's eyes glistened with pleasure when he thought that soon he might be an officer in that magnificent regiment.

The father and son that day dined together, and after dinner the conversation was upon the youth's chance of being admitted into the Life Guards. Mr. Beauchamp turned over in his mind the name of every friend who was possessed of any influence with the commander-in-chief. At last he determined to apply to the lord-lieutenant of his county on the subject, who was himself a general in the army, and an intimate friend of the duke's. It is true Mr. Beauchamp had no intimacy with the lord-lieutenant, but they had met more than once on county business, and the friendly feeling that noblemen had shown him on those occasions now encouraged him to make the attempt. He was still more inclined to make the application from the extreme anxiety of his son, who already seemed to imagine himself in the splendid uniform worn by the officers of the Life Guards, and sat as erect at table as if at that moment he had been under the instructions of the drill-sergeant.

The next morning Mr. Beauchamp went alone to the

house of the lord-lieutenant; fortunately he found him at home. He received Mr. Beauchamp in a very friendly manner, and readily promised him all the assistance in his power.

"I will make a point," he said, "of calling on the commander-in-chief to-day, and using all the influence with him I can. By the by, what sort of a youth is your son; for on that point I shall be sure to be questioned?"

"You would smile if I told you the truth," said Mr. Beauchamp, "and consider I was allowing the feeling of a father to outrage most impudently the fact. But candidly speaking, and without prejudice in his favor, a handsomer, or finer young fellow you never saw. Beyond that, he is high-spirited, honorable, and energetic, and I flatter myself he would not disgrace any regiment in the world."

"How old is he?"

"About eighteen; he has only just left Harrow."

"I am glad to hear that, for he is doubtless well educated. I should have a great objection to recommend any one who was not."

Mr. Beauchamp blushed slightly, but said nothing.

"I will not trouble you to call on me again on this subject," continued his lordship; "on any other I shall be most happy to see you. As soon as I have had an interview with the commander-in-chief, I will communicate to you the result. Where are you stopping in London?"

"At the Chapter Coffee-house, St. Paul's."

"Very well; you will soon hear from me, and, I trust, favorably."

When Mr. Beauchamp returned to his hotel, he found his son waiting for him in a state of intense anxiety.

He listened impatiently to his father's recital. He was delighted with the result; the only drawback to his satisfaction was the time that would pass before they received his lordship's letter relating to his interview with the commander-in-chief.

Mr. Beauchamp having some business of his own to attend to, then left his son to himself for the remainder of the day, and never did time pass more slowly than it did with the cornet in expectation. He first walked to Knightsbridge and again examined (externally) the barracks. He was somewhat disappointed, however, for not one of the officers was to be seen, and the few men that were about were in their fatigue dresses.

He then returned to St. Paul's to see if any letter had arrived for his father. Finding there was none, he started off to the Horse Guards, and amused himself with examining the two mounted guards, who were on duty there, as well as the solitary dismounted one who was walking to and fro in the court-yard. He then examined the door through which he would have to pass, if ever he was fortunate enough to be introduced to the commander-in-chief. While thus occupied, he noticed a middle-aged soldier-like looking gentleman leave it. On reflection, he thought he bore some resemblance to the description his father had given of the lord-lieutenant. He, therefore, determined to return to St. Paul's to receive the letter as soon as it should arrive. When he had crossed the road to Whitehall, he turned round to take another look at the Horse Guards. He then noticed two officers of the Life Guards looking out from one of the windows with their elbows placed on a black horse-hair sofa-pillow placed on the window-sill. Oh, how he admired and envied those epaulets as they glittered in the broad sunshine! He continued gazing at the officers till

at last he perceived he had attracted their notice, so he left the spot and continued his road home. Here he waited till his father returned to dinner. To his question, whether any letter had arrived for him, his son answered mournfully in the negative.

At dinner young Beauchamp suggested a thousand different conjectures as to the reason the letter had not arrived, nor had the reasonable excuses his father made for its non-arrival the slightest effect in modifying his anxiety. His appetite, generally of the best, had totally vanished; indeed, he hardly tasted a mouthful all dinner-time. Night brought him but little sleep and less rest, and the next morning found him with an expression of fatigue and disappointment rarely seen on his handsome countenance. That day passed as heavily with him as the day before, and father and son met at dinner-time, the latter miserably low-spirited and the former somewhat anxious. The dinner appeared as tasteless to the young man as the last, at least during the greater part of the time, and both father and son were unusually silent. At last a waiter brought a letter for Mr. Beauchamp. The son started from his chair and went round to his father's side of the table to look over him as he read the letter. It was from the lord-lieutenant, requesting Mr. Beauchamp and his son to meet him at the Horse Guards at two o'clock the next day, for the purpose of introducing them to the commander-in-chief. His lordship also added, that from the interview he had had with his grace the day before, he augured most favorably for the probability of success.

There was no lack of conversation now, either on the part of father or son, and the latter's appetite returned with full vigor. A thousand topics were touched upon as to the probable time it would be before the appoint-

ment would appear in the *Gazette*, the cost of uniform, the selection of chargers, and other subjects connected with the cornetship. In this manner father and son occupied themselves till the bell of St. Paul's tolled eleven, and then both, to the content of the waiters, called for their candles and separated for the night.

The next day they met early at breakfast. Shortly afterwards the son went to make some preparations for his dress before waiting on the commander-in-chief. There was ample time before the hour of meeting, but young Beauchamp fully occupied the whole of it. He commenced before his father left the hotel to attend morning service in the cathedral, and had not finished when he returned home from it. At last his toilet was completed, and the hour getting near for the appointment, they ordered a hackney coach and arrived at the Horse Guards half an hour before the time named.

They waited impatiently for his lordship's arrival, who was, however, punctual. The few minutes they had to themselves before the interview took place was occupied by his lordship in more particularly explaining what had occurred the day before, and in advising young Beauchamp how to behave when in his grace's presence. At last they were admitted, and the hearts of both father and son throbbed when they entered. The expression on the faces of both was exceedingly curious. The father's look of pride when the splendid young man was introduced as his son, and the affected military rigidity both in face and figure of the young fellow, who appeared to consider it as a mark of respect to the great soldier to hold himself in a position that deprived him of every appearance of flexibility. The short interview passed agreeably enough. The duke was not a man of many words; but the end of their short conversation

was, that at that moment there was no vacancy in the Life Guards, but that Mr. Beauchamp's son's name should be placed upon the list of applicants and in his turn he should receive his commission. On leaving, the lord-lieutenant complimented both father and son on the result of the interview, and with many warm expressions of good feeling he took leave of them.

The father and son then walked home together. The young man's tongue during the time was not still one moment together. It was with some difficulty that his father could restrain him from entering the first army tailor's they passed, to make inquiries about his uniform.

That day after dinner, Mr. Beauchamp addressed his son on a subject which he feared might not be taken in as good part as he intended it, but which his duty as a parent told him ought to be entered upon.

"A circumstance," he commenced, "occurred the day before yesterday, which gave me some little annoyance, but which I trust you will assist me in remedying. It is easily in your power, and requires but a little good-will and attention on your part to accomplish. I was complimented by his lordship on the certainty of your having received a good education. That, unfortunately, has not been the case, far less from any fault on your part than the unfortunate delicacy of constitution which deprived you of those advantages which most boys in your position of society possess. I have now this proposition to make to you, that you should remain as a private pupil in the house of one of the tutors of Harrow school, in the position of a young man reading for college. By the time you receive your commission, you will, with a little application, have acquired as much information as will enable you to take your standing among men of education. This I am sure you will do

to oblige me, for I, as a clergyman of the Church of England, and a man of education myself, should feel much hurt if even a suspicion of ignorance, or defective education, should attach itself to my son."

The young man reflected for a moment, and during the time his father watched his countenance with considerable anxiety. There was, however, no occasion for the feeling.

"My dear father," he replied, "if I am not well educated, at least I have great respect for learning. I shall willingly follow the plan you propose. Only let me go home first for a few weeks and see my mother. Afterwards I will return to Harrow, and it shall be no fault of mine if you are not contented with me."

No further conversation on the subject passed between them that evening. It need hardly be told how proud was Mr. Beauchamp of his son that night; few happier fathers than himself could have then been found in the vast metropolis that surrounded him.

Two days after their interview at the Horse Guards, Mr. Beauchamp and his son started for home. Mr. Beauchamp took the opportunity of passing through Harrow, not only for the purpose of making arrangements for placing his son under the care of one of the masters of the school as a private pupil, but also to see an old clerical friend who had been a tutor there when Mr. Beauchamp himself was a school-boy. This being accomplished, they continued their journey home.

All attempts to describe the joy of Mrs. Beauchamp at the sight of her son would be useless. It would be impossible to give an idea of its intensity. Her eyes seemed almost to worship the handsome young fellow; to her he appeared something more than mortal. To do the lad only justice, he was also exceedingly attached to

his mother. Party after party she gave for the purpose of introducing him to her friends, and her ears in return were perpetually feasted with the sound of his praises. After a sojourn at the rectory of nearly a month's duration, he put in practice the advice given him by his father, and started off again for Harrow.

The next six months passed without any thing particularly worthy of remark. Mr. Beauchamp was principally occupied with the routine and charitable duties of his parish, while his curates attended more particularly to the spiritual care of his flock. His son, on his part, had applied himself sedulously to his studies, and as want of natural ability was by no means one of his defects, the progress he had made was most satisfactory. It must be owned that the literature which interested him the most was the systematic examination of the *London Gazette*. The disappointment that each week brought with it, on finding that his name was omitted, was more than compensated, however, by the anticipation that it might appear in the next.

Winter came on, and still young Beauchamp had not received his commission. His progress in his studies had been so satisfactory, that even his father admitted there remained no necessity for his further continuance at Harrow, as his education was now far more advanced than it was usual to find in officers of crack cavalry regiments. It was therefore decided that he should leave Harrow at Christmas, and remain at the rectory till he should be gazetted.

About the middle of December, Mr. Beauchamp received a letter from the colonel of the regiment, saying that there was a cornetcy at the moment vacant, and hoping that the opportunity would not be lost for again getting the lord-lieutenant to use his influence in obtain-

ing it for Mr. Beauchamp's son; but the advice was needless, for a letter the next day arrived from his lordship, saying, that having heard of the vacancy, he had applied for it and received the positive promise that it should be given to his *protégé*, and that it would infallibly appear in the next week's *Gazette*.

This news, as may be easily imagined, threw all at the rectory into a state of great excitement, and a family council was immediately held, at which it was decided that Mr. Beauchamp should leave home in two days for London, where he should remain till the commission was arranged, the uniform purchased, the chargers selected, and all the various requisites for fitting out a young officer for a cavalry regiment terminated. This would allow time for Mr. Beauchamp to complete every thing easily, and to return from London so as to be able to pass the last week of Christmas at the rectory without difficulty.

Mr. Beauchamp would willingly have started on his mission the next day, but he was detained at home in consequence of a somewhat large dinner-party he was about to give, and which was to come off on the morrow. To this many of the gentry living in the vicinity of the rectory had been invited, as well as some of the more substantial members of Mr. Beauchamp's congregation. To these may be added the two curates who have already been mentioned, and without whom a dinner-party at the rectory would hardly have been thought complete.

All was bustle at the rectory the next day, but as all were in high good-humor, fatigue was but little felt. Evening came on and the guests began to assemble; the first arrivals were the two curates. Of course the happy mother related to each in succession the news that her

son was immediately to receive his commission, and all the details of the various events connected with the subject.

The next comers were a highly-substantial farmer and his wife. Attentive as had been the curates to her narration, they had been but indifferent listeners when compared with the farmer. He made many inquiries, especially about the chargers; and he finished by remarking that he had a splendid black blood mare, admirably adapted for carrying a young man of young Mr. Beauchamp's weight; indeed, so much was he interested in the subject, that it was plain this unsophisticated British farmer had as keen an eye for business as could have been found in a London commercial traveller.

The other guests arrived in due time, and at last dinner was announced. It has already been hinted that a love for a somewhat too extended hospitality was a failing of Mr. Beauchamp's, and that evening he had carried his failing to excess. All appearance of ostentation in it was lost, even if such a feeling ever existed in the mind of the worthy rector, in the warm-hearted kindness of himself and wife. They were both in high spirits, for the certainty of their son receiving his commission in the course of a week had made them perfectly happy.

Poor-laws, cattle, corn, rates, weather, and all the other ordinary subjects of conversation in rural districts were all touched upon. The coldness habitual to the early part of an English party soon vanished in the general good-humor, and the profuse display of the most delicious and costly wines prevented it even in the slightest degree from flagging.

The dinner ended, and the dessert was placed upon the table. Good-humor and fluent conversation now

became gayety; and the merry laugh, and loud conversation on many different subjects, all at the same moment, occasioned a confused sound, which would have been strongly objected to in a staid London party; but here, if all were not intimate friends, certainly all were well known to each other, and a little extra license might probably be excused.

The ladies, taking the hint from their hostess, retired, and the gentlemen closed up nearer their host. Fresh wine was brought in, and laughter and good-humor, great as they were before now, arose to a still greater degree. One feature was present at the time which is common to all feasts where the clergy are in excess—not a jest, not a word escaped from any one present which might have offended the ears of the most fastidious. In their merriment, the guests only obeyed the wish of their host, and he was happy in seeing them enjoy themselves. Even the two starched curates melted in the genial warmth which surrounded them, and they were as merry as the rest. Presently an animated conversation took place between the doctor, who of course was present, and one of the other guests, on the quality of a bottle of Burgundy on the table; the man of science, who, in common with many others of his profession, considered himself an authority in matters of gastronomy, insisted on its excellence, while his adversary, without denying its excellence, insisted that it required a more fruity flavor to make it perfect.

"But, my dear sir," said the doctor, "you should judge a wine of this description by its French test, and not by your English ideas of excellence. That strong fruity flavor you praise so much is not found in what the French consider first-class wines. Strength and fruitiness is not all that is required by them. I main-

tain that this is as fine a glass of Burgundy as was ever tasted."

"What is it, Mr. Wilson?" inquired the host.

"I was merely remarking," said Mr. Wilson, "that, excellent as this wine undoubtedly is, to my taste I like a more fruity one."

"Better keep to Port, then," said the doctor, sarcastically.

"He talks unthinkingly, Mr. Wilson," said Mr. Beauchamp, laughing, and noticing a slight appearance of displeasure on the face of his guest. "Never mind the doctor; you know he is prejudiced; but if you like a more fruity wine, I think I can please you."

"My dear sir," was the reply, "pray do not think of such a thing. I assure you that nothing could be more purely conversational than my remark; but, at the same time, I am very angry with the doctor for giving the slightest importance to an observation of the kind."

"Don't quarrel with me," said the doctor. "Remember I am the only medical man for many miles round. You cannot do without me, you know."

"Nevertheless, I will prove you in error, doctor," said Mr. Beauchamp; "and I will make you acknowledge that a strong Burgundy, and a fruity, can be a fine wine as well."

So saying, he rose from his chair to ring the bell, but before he reached it the butler entered the room.

"Get me a bottle of that last Burgundy," said Mr. Beauchamp, before the man had time to speak.

"Yes, sir," he answered, and then, in an under tone, he whispered something to his master.

"In the library!" said Mr. Beauchamp. "That is fortunate, indeed. Doctor, pray take my chair for a few minutes. I shall not be long. The butler will bring

you the Burgundy, and before the coffee is sent in I shall be with you again."

Mr. Beauchamp then left the room, evidently much pleased at the intelligence he had received, and the doctor seated himself at the head of the table.

"Now, gentlemen," said he, "we will take one more glass before this crack bottle arrives."

"Stop," said a gentleman at the bottom of the table, who was notorious for his love of indulging in that laborious tomfoolery after-dinner speaking. "I have, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, a toast to propose. I think it would be a great proof of ingratitude on our parts if we omitted drinking our host's health in his absence. (Hear, hear.) I cannot, I am fully aware, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, do justice to the toast in the few crude remarks I am about to make; but I am sure, sir, you and my friends will bear with me, when I state it will be my inability and not my will that prevents me speaking of our reverend friend in the manner he deserves. You will perhaps think it an act of presumption on my part, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking." (No, no.)

"I think I have heard that last sentence somewhere before," said one curate to the other, sarcastically and in an under tone. But although it was evidently not the intention of the speaker that it should reach any ear other than that of his brother curate, the orator heard it. He stopped short for a moment in his speech, and cast a dignified, withering look at the culprit, and was for a moment silent.

"Order, order, gentlemen," said the doctor.

"I will not notice the interruption," said the orator, "but continue my remarks, hoping that when you are tired of them you will call me to order, that I may not

trespass on the valuable time of the company. (Go on.) Well, sir, I am certain that all present will agree with me, but those who are envious of our host, if any such there be"—(this was said with a fulminating glance at the guilty curate)—"when I state that a more Christian-like pastor, or one whose course of life more closely resembled that of the apostles, never lived."

The company seemed rather puzzled what expression of countenance to put on at this remark, but the speaker, in the earnestness of the moment, and to suit the action to the word, knocked over, accidentally, a wine-glass with his hand, which diverted, for the moment, his own and the company's attention. A smile at the accident now began to appear on the faces of those present, which they took some trouble to conceal. At the conclusion of a dinner-party, a very little incident of the kind will very frequently furnish food for a considerable amount of mirth.

"As it is, no doubt," continued the orator, "the desire of us all to join the ladies as quickly as possible, I am sure you will forgive me if I, perhaps depriving some more eloquent man of an excellent subject for his discourse, couple with the name of Mr. Beauchamp, in the toast, that of his excellent, amiable wife. (Hear, hear.) A more charming, accomplished woman than she is I am sure does not live. If my voice in her praise is boundless, my esteem for her is weak."

A loud and totally irrepressible burst of laughter followed this blunder of the speaker, who had evidently intended to have reversed the sentence. He glanced angrily around, and was upon the point of expressing himself strongly on the rudeness he had received, when the doctor interposed. With mock gravity he called the meeting to order, and requested the honorable gen-

tleman might be heard with the respect due both to him and his subject. The speaker continued:

"I will," said he, "trespass but a short time longer on the patience of the meeting, as I perceive my words—I have too much respect for those present to say my subject—is distasteful. (No, no; go on.) Well, gentlemen, as you desire it, I will go on. I intended to say ——"

Here the speaker suddenly ceased, and gazed with intense astonishment at some one entering the door of the room. All eyes were immediately directed to the same object. Had the handwriting appeared upon the wall their dismay and astonishment could not have been greater. The object on which they gazed was their host, but oh! how changed from the man who a few minutes before had quitted them! All color had fled from his face, and on it was a terrible expression of horror and despair. He walked or rather staggered to a chair, and there, placing his hands on the back of it, supported himself for a moment. He looked wildly and anxiously at his guests, as trying to realize the situation, but not a word escaped his lips. The ashy paleness of his face became still more deathlike in its hue, and he evidently was on the point of fainting.

"You had better take a glass of wine, sir," said the doctor, pouring him out a glass of port. Mr. Beauchamp put out his trembling hand, and taking the glass, bore it with difficulty to his lips, and, in a moment, swallowed its contents. The wine seemed partially to revive him. He raised his hand to his brow, and exclaimed in a loud but tremulous voice:

"Oh! my God, how shall I break it to my poor wife?"

At that moment an aged, gentlemanly-looking man,

of clerical appearance, who had formerly been Mr. Beauchamp's tutor at Harrow, and who had entered the room unperceived, now came forward, and, taking the unhappy man by the arm, said to him in a kind tone of voice:

"Come, Beauchamp, it must be done. Come with me, my dear fellow."

Mr. Beauchamp mechanically obeyed him, and they quitted the room. As soon as they had left, the guests asked the butler for an explanation. The man informed them that the elderly clergyman, when he arrived, asked to see Mr. Beauchamp in private. He then told the unhappy father that the day before, the pride of his heart, his darling son, had been on a visit to a friend at Barnet, and that he had gone out with a youth, the son of the master of the house, to shoot rabbits. The boy, who was in advance of the young man, was thrusting his way through a hedge, when his gun, which was on full cock, exploded, and its contents were lodged in young Mr. Beauchamp's heart, who fell back and immediately expired.

The butler had hardly completed his statement, when the most distressing screams were heard in the drawing-room, and directly afterwards, a female servant entered the dining-room to request the immediate attendance of the doctor. The guests then sadly and quietly left the house, and in less than half an hour after the first intelligence of the sad event had arrived, it was left in possession of the heart-broken parents, the doctor in attendance, and the reverend gentleman who had been the messenger of this terrible misfortune, and who was now trying to pour the consolations of religion on the wounded spirits of the sufferers.

I will not dwell on the sad scenes which took place in

that house of sorrow. The poor young man, after the coroner's inquest, was buried at Harrow. His father was the chief mourner, and the clergyman, who had brought the intelligence, stood by his side. The worthy man was anxious lest poor Beauchamp should not be able to go through the sad ceremony, but his fear was needless; the bereaved parent supported it infinitely better than had been anticipated; indeed, with so much firmness as to elicit the wonder of the many spectators, as well as the old school-fellows of his son, who attended the funeral. There was a singular sort of resolution in his countenance, which completely concealed all appearance of grief. Not a tear did he shed during the whole of the ceremony. He stood by the grave firmly erect, almost affectedly erect, as conscious the eyes of many were upon him. His brows were contracted, and he appeared as if he had prepared himself to answer some probable or expected insult or uncivil remark.

The funeral over, he retired to his friend's house, still calm, or rather determined, and, after a short time, during which he answered the few remarks which were made to him in a harsh or somewhat stern manner, he retired to his room and remained there the remainder of the day.

Was the apathy he showed real? His friend thought so, till the shades of night were falling, when he had occasion to change his opinion. Then, on passing Beauchamp's room, he heard the heart-rending sobs of the father sorrowing over the loss of an only and dearly-loved son, nor did they cease except at short intervals during the whole of the night. Mr. —— was too well acquainted with human nature to attempt to interfere with a grief so terrible, and justly imagined the better course was to give it full sway.

It was late the next day before Mr. Beauchamp left his room. His countenance had then on it the same air of determination it wore at the funeral. His behavior to his host was barely courteous, so short and abrupt were the remarks or answers he made. In the evening he took a somewhat formal leave of his friend, and, entering a post-chaise, started on his journey home.

For some time after Mr. Beauchamp's return to the rectory he was but little seen. Neither he nor his wife made their appearance at church for several weeks. For her, poor woman, there was a good valid excuse. It would be difficult to imagine a human being more completely broken-hearted, more completely crushed, than she was. With her husband it was different; he overcame his loss with a rapidity that astonished all. Occasionally, it is true, paroxysms of sorrow would burst forth, but they lasted but a short time. The intervals between them became gradually longer, and before three months had passed over since his son's death, they had entirely ceased. The manner these isolated attacks of sorrow presented themselves was exceedingly singular. For example, he would leave his room late in the day without the slightest trace of sadness upon him. Towards noon, occasionally considerable depression of spirits would come on, which a short time afterwards would completely vanish; and he would enjoy his dinner so thoroughly, that it appeared at the moment as the one great object of his existence. A remarkable circumstance was noticed in his conduct by his friends. Although he was certainly a most affectionate husband, he took no trouble to console his wife, whose sorrow continued unabated. He seemed rather to avoid her purposely. Since their son's death, they had occupied separate apartments, and but little intercourse seemed to

pass between them. It must not be imagined that his behavior was in the slightest degree unkind to her; on the contrary, when in her presence, he was invariably most attentive to her, but a coolness certainly appeared to exist between them. On her part, doubtless, it was only an appearance caused by her one absorbing sorrow. On his part it was real, but what hidden cause there was for it, it was impossible to divine. Another singular fact was noticed in his behavior. Since the funeral, on no occasion had family prayers been offered up in his house. His wife never left her room till late in the day; and Mr. Beauchamp himself, formerly most observant in all religious duties, now seemed to regard them with perfect indifference.

Six months had scarcely elapsed since the funeral before every trace of his loss appeared to have vanished from the mind of Mr. Beauchamp. He not only now mingled freely in society, but he also carried his own hospitality to a degree far exceeding the profuse liberality he formerly indulged in. The number of his intimates also increased, but, unfortunately, their respectability did not increase in proportion with their numbers. There were now among his associates many whose lives were of a description not to pass without severe reprobation by a Christian clergyman, who conscientiously did his duty. Another feature also entered into his change of manners. If formerly he had carried his hospitality further than the most scrupulous would have admired, he had never, in one single instance, exceeded the bounds of the strictest propriety. Now it was occasionally, nay, frequently, far different. Instead of rising from table as formerly at an early hour, he and his associates would sit together till near midnight, utterly regardless of the frequent summonses, which occasion-

ally took the form of entreaties, from Mrs. Beauchamp for them to join the ladies. The spiritual and business duties of his parish were now entirely administered by his curates. It is true, Mr. Beauchamp continued to be as liberal in his charities, or perhaps more so than ever, but the manner of his giving had changed. The kind feeling which had formerly accompanied his almsgiving was lost. He gave liberally, but carelessly. There was no distinction in it. The loudest claimant received the most—not that Mr. Beauchamp admitted the stronger justice of the claim, but solely to avoid importunity—while those who, from modesty, held back, and whom formerly he would have sought out, were passed by him now wholly disregarded. Again, it was hinted that he received applications for assistance occasionally from a certain class with whom he, as a clergyman, ought, above all others, to have been especially guarded, with an amount of jocularity or levity that was highly reprehensible.

During this gradual change in his behavior for the worse, it was singular to remark the conduct of his poor wife. She, although heart-broken at the loss of her son, could not help perceiving the unfortunate impression her husband's irregularities were making in the minds of those whose good opinion was most to be valued. She immediately attempted, by every exertion in her power, to neutralize whatever might have appeared objectionable in his conduct. If he failed to visit those most in need of his assistance, they received from her a double portion of attention. If her husband had let fall any observation which might have wounded the susceptibilities of his former friends, those were the special objects of her efforts, and to them she endeavored, by enumerating his good qualities, and quoting the benevo-

lent acts he had really done, to raise him again in their estimation. To those of the most conscientious of his congregation who objected to his total absence from the pulpit, she would plead how much the loss of his son still bore upon his mind, notwithstanding the efforts he made to make the contrary appear; and how terrible that loss might be to a parent the poor woman clearly showed by the ineffaceable traces of sorrow on her own countenance and drooping form. At his dinner-parties, although she abhorred them, she invariably took her place at the table, and her presence there was prolonged to a far later hour than the mistress of a house is accustomed to remain, with the intention of checking, by her presence, any approach to conversation which might be objectionable, and in consequence, the more the danger appeared, the longer she remained.

Another year passed over them. The next found the eccentricities in Mr. Beauchamp's behavior still greater than they were the year previous. There was now no doubt as to the impropriety of his behavior, for he took but little trouble to conceal it. Frequently he was met, when from home, in a more than partial state of intoxication. It was even hinted that he had been seen drinking in the society of those whose very acquaintanceship would be prejudicial to the character of a clergyman. He had also become a frequenter of every race-course within twenty miles of his living, and his betting-book, which, however, he denied keeping, was occasionally capable of proving that he made very heavy losses. The more respectable portion of his parishioners now openly showed their disapprobation at his conduct; nor was the conciliatory behavior of his wife of the least use in calming their just indignation. It was afterwards reported in the parish that he had received an excessively

severe rebuke from the bishop of his diocese; certainly, for some little time, his manners changed for the better. His rollicking manner was now laid aside, but he wore in its place an appearance of sanctimonious hypocrisy which sat but indifferently on his now bloated features. He again took part in the church service, but those who had blamed his absence now regretted he had returned, and sincerely wished the two curates had again confided to them the spiritual duties of the parish.

He had not resumed, for more than a month, the church duties of his living, when he said he had received from his solicitor a letter which would necessitate his visiting London, where he would have to remain a week or ten days at the longest. He made no explanation to his wife nor any one else of the particular business he was called upon to transact. He pretended, however, that it was of the greatest importance, and when Mrs. Beauchamp asked him if she could be of any use to him if she went with him, she received an abrupt and somewhat uncivil answer in the negative. The next day he left the rectory, but, instead of returning to it at the time appointed, they saw nothing of him for more than a month. His wife's anxiety, during his absence, was of the most cruel description. Hearing nothing from him, she had written to him at the Chapter Coffee-house, where he was wont to take up his abode during his visits to the metropolis, but she received no answer. She then wrote to the proprietor, requesting him to forward the letter to Mr. Beauchamp, but she heard, in reply, that Mr. Beauchamp had not been there, nor did they know his address. Immediately afterwards, however, she received, with no little satisfaction, a letter from her husband, informing her that he was on the point of returning home.

To the pleasure expressed by his wife at again seeing him, he returned a cold, abrupt answer, and immediately afterwards retired to his room. The next morning he rose late, and remained in his study the greater part of the day. At dinner, when he presented himself, it was impossible not to detect the difference in his appearance. He was thinner in body, considerably so. His face was red and bloated, and his eye was inflamed. He drank frequently, and as the wine began to have its effect, his good humor rose with it, and for the first time since his return, he entered into conversation with his wife. He rattled on at a great rate about the law business which had detained him in London. His wife listened with feigned interest, but the forced attention she gave but ill concealed the doubt she entertained of his veracity. Little accustomed as she was to business matters, she could easily perceive that every statement her husband made was false, that he was inventing every thing he told her as he went on, thus leaving on her mind the settled conviction that his method of spending his time, since he had been absent from her, was of a description which would have afforded her but little pleasure.

He read prayers the next Sunday in church. When in the pulpit, the extraordinary change in his countenance was even more apparent than when at home. His manner even betrayed a suspicion that that morning, before entering the church, he had had recourse to the spirit-bottle to sustain him during the service. His poor wife held her head down during the whole time, and, when the service was over, she remained to the last to avoid, if possible, the remarks she might accidentally hear on her road home.

Things continued in this unsatisfactory way for another three months. Mr. Beauchamp regularly gave two din-

ner-parties each week. To these were invited all the gentlemen in the neighborhood, who still continued on friendly terms with him; and even some of those who openly expressed their disapprobation at his conduct, were not above accepting the hospitality of the man whose behavior they considered so disreputable. The only good effect of these parties was to cement the good feeling of some of his parishioners more firmly to him, and to deaden considerably the hostility of those who disapproved of his conduct, yet could not resist the temptation of his dinners.

One morning, a respectably-dressed young man called at the rectory, and asked to see Mr. Beauchamp. He was informed that Mr. and Mrs. Beauchamp were from home, but that they were expected in shortly. The stranger proposed waiting till his return. He was shown into the library, and when Mrs. Beauchamp returned she was informed of the visit. Fearing it might be some time before her husband returned, and thinking it might be some one, either directly or indirectly connected with the parish, she determined to see the stranger herself. On entering the library, she there found a flippant young man, who evaded her questions in a manner which seemed to say, "You want to draw me out, but you will not succeed." While she was conversing with him, her husband entered, and she immediately informed the stranger that it was Mr. Beauchamp.

"I am instructed to present you, sir, with the copy of a writ. It is for two thousand pounds; if you wish to see the original I can show it to you. You know the particulars, I dare say. I suppose you will place it in the hands of your solicitor, and it may save time if you give me his address at once. The name of our firm you will find on the writ."

Mr. Beauchamp took the writ without making any remark, but he was evidently much annoyed at the subject being spoken of in the presence of his wife. As soon as the attorney's clerk had gone, he informed her that it was a claim he intended to dispute; in fact, that he did not owe one shilling of the sum demanded, and that he would carry it through every court of law in England rather than be imposed upon. He moreover informed her that he would be obliged to leave for London the next day, but that this time he would take good care to keep her well informed of his movements, and in what way his cause was proceeding. His wife had no objection to offer. She was naturally suspicious that she would not hear the truth, but she said nothing. She could not imagine how a man of Mr. Beauchamp's fortune, and whose affairs were placed in the hands of one of the most respectable solicitors of the metropolis, could have a disputed claim for such an amount. Her suspicions would have been changed into terror had she known the truth—that the action was brought for the amount of a promissory-note he had given to cover part of several very heavy gambling losses, he having already paid as much as he could raise by the sale of such of his assets as he could readily turn into money.

If the behavior of Mr. Beauchamp was objectionable during his last visit to London, it was now infamous. It had but one redeeming quality: it was so outrageous, it carried with it a strong suspicion of insanity. There was hardly a gambling-house of any note at which he was not a habitual visitor, nor a horse-race at which he had not a large sum of money staked. On one occasion, the police entered a notorious hell in the neighborhood of St. James's street, and the whole of its inmates were removed to the police-station. They were all taken

before the magistrate the next day, and among them was Mr. Beauchamp. He received from the magistrate a severe rebuke on the impropriety of his conduct, which, fortunately, as he was still in a state of partial intoxication, he had the good sense to take in silence. On another occasion he was found by the police, while in a state of helpless intoxication, in society far more disreputable.

When he returned to the rectory, his behavior became so notorious, yet, at the same time, so eccentric, that one of Mrs. Beauchamp's trustees considered himself called upon to interfere, although somewhat against her inclination. Her trustee, however, explained to her how necessary it was for the reputation of her husband himself. That if the unfortunate man could be proved a lunatic, that portion of his behavior which was now regarded with reprobation, would then be looked upon as a misfortune, and that the honor of his family would thereby be saved. Convinced by this style of reasoning, Mrs. Beauchamp at last gave her consent. Proceedings were forthwith instituted, and a commission of lunacy decided on.

Mr. Beauchamp was highly indignant at the proceeding, and resolved to oppose it by all the means in his power. On the other side, every action of the unhappy man which appeared to bear the taint of insanity was sought for, and many and numerous they were. In the mean time, Mr. Beauchamp, who was assisted by a disreputable, drunken solicitor of his acquaintance, made on his side strong preparations for the defence. He collected many of the charitable and liberal acts his client had performed during the time of the alleged lunacy, and they were not few, with the intent to show that he had the while performed properly his duty as a Christian

minister. His solicitor knew perfectly well how points of the kind tell with a jury. Added to these, he had little difficulty in finding certain members of his client's congregation who were willing to testify to his sanity, and these, he pretended, had the best means of judging, from the fact they had been of those who had most frequently shared the hospitality of Mr. Beauchamp's table. The solicitor also wished to have Mrs. Beauchamp herself examined; but, before deciding on it, he wished to see her, but she had removed to the house of her trustee, and declined all communication on the subject.

The commission came off in due time. In proof of the insanity, many extravagancies were brought forward, and many witnesses examined; but the most glaring acts of dissipation were concealed, out of respect to Mrs. Beauchamp; though still enough was shown to prove a strong *prima facie* case of his being incapable of managing his own affairs. For the proof of his sanity, Mr. Beauchamp himself was called. He had evidently taken great pains with his appearance, and was most guarded in his evidence, not to say one word that should throw the slightest doubt on his sanity. His answers were cool, collected, and sensible, in fact of such a description as the most finished scholar and gentleman need not have felt ashamed of. The result of his examination was evidently a most favorable impression on the minds of the jury, which the evidence of the remaining witnesses tended to confirm. It was admitted that Mr. Beauchamp was a man of great liberality and hospitality; but, withal, charitable and kind-hearted to a degree seldom met with, and it was skilfully argued, that his indulgence in these estimable qualities had raised the cupidity of those who wished his money used solely for their own benefit. The case terminated. Mr. Beauchamp's sanity

was declared perfect, and a strong animadversion was expressed by the jury against those who had attempted to deprive so excellent a man, for selfish motives, of his personal liberty. The public press took up the subject with great animation, and the behavior of Mrs. Beauchamp and her trustee met with universal reprobation.

Mr. Beauchamp now returned in triumph to his living; but his wife remained at the house of her trustee. For some days after his arrival, Mr. Beauchamp was occupied in receiving and entertaining different acquaintances who called to congratulate him on the result of the commission. To all these he was profuse in his gratitude, describing himself as a martyr to the persecutions of a dishonest attorney, who, to make costs, had induced Mrs. Beauchamp to commence proceedings, as well as the wickedness of her trustee, who had taken that step to revenge himself of a supposed affront he had received years before. During these interviews, Mr. Beauchamp's solicitor was always present, and by his tact and cunning contrived, by taking part in these conversations, which placed Mr. Beauchamp in the light of a much injured man, to keep alive his angry feeling, and thus to gain another source of profit by inducing his client to commence proceedings against his wife for a restitution of conjugal rights. Fortunately, circumstances occurred which prevented this proceeding being carried out; but it was carried on to a point which made it a source of considerable expense to his wife, and one of great profit to her husband's solicitor.

During the commencement of the new proceedings he gave himself full license in his pleasures, so much so, that his own solicitor, albeit a man most indulgent in circumstances of the kind, was obliged to remonstrate with him on the subject; not that his client's behavior

in any way shocked his sensitiveness, but that he thought the notoriety his patron was rapidly gaining was likely to be prejudicial to the success of the suit. As the affairs of the parish were now carried on entirely by the two curates, Mr. Beauchamp's eccentricities were not brought so prominently before the parishioners as they otherwise would have been, and he had still sense enough left to carry on his follies at some little distance from home. Occasionally, also, he visited the metropolis, where his bad actions were far less likely to be known than they would have been in a secluded rural district; and when he returned home his constitution had been so much damaged by the life he had been leading, that he easily pleaded sickness as an excuse for avoiding the society of his fellow-parishioners. It must not be imagined that his constitution and character were alone damaged by the life he was leading. More than once, to satisfy his creditors for gambling debts, he had been obliged to raise money from the bill-brokers, and unfortunately for him the class of gentry to whom he applied, were too well acquainted with the art and mystery of their trade not to make one loan the parent of another; in fact his fortune was disappearing rapidly.

An accident at last put a stop, for some time, to this course of folly, dissipation, and madness. He had been dining at a race-dinner which had been held at a small town about seven or eight miles distant from the rectory. He had lost considerably on the events of the day, and his temper had been somewhat ruffled by the circumstance. He drank at the dinner even far more than he was accustomed to take on those occasions, but the excitement of the conversation to a certain degree modified the effect, so that, when he left the inn, his state of inebriety was not remarked by the other guests, and he

mounted his horse to return home without any apparent difficulty. He was a bold rider, and invariably rode good and high-spirited horses. It was considerably past midnight when he started for home, and the day was far advanced without his having reached it. The old woman who now took charge of his establishment (all the regular female servants, many of whom had resided several years in his family, left when Mrs. Beauchamp quitted the house) became alarmed, and as soon as some of the laborers employed on the glebe came in from their work, she requested one of them to go immediately to the inn at which she knew he was to dine, and ask the landlord if he knew any thing of her master. The principal cause of her uneasiness arose from the fact that she was perfectly well aware the solicitor had that morning proceeded to London on business of importance, and that her master was to follow him by the evening coach. Mr. Beauchamp had also ordered her to sit up, for he should certainly be home at an early hour.

In the afternoon, the laborer returned with the intelligence that Mr. Beauchamp had quitted the inn shortly after midnight, and that they had heard nothing of him since. She communicated the fact to the doctor, who had called in; and he suggested that men should be sent out in every direction that led to the inn to find, if possible some traces of her master. This was done, and, about an hour afterwards, one returned with the horse, which he had found quietly browsing on some grass by the road-side. Shortly afterwards, four others appeared, carrying between them an apparently lifeless body, which proved to be Mr. Beauchamp. He presented a perfectly frightful spectacle. His face and hair were covered with blood, and his clothes were stained with mud. One leg was hanging in such a manner as gave reason to believe

that some terrible fracture of the thigh had taken place, which was rendered still more probable from the fact that his trousers were perfectly saturated with blood. He was immediately carried to his room and placed on his bed and the doctor sent for, who returned with the messenger. Upon examination, there were found several severe bruises about the head, as well as a scalp wound of considerable dimensions; but the greatest injury he had received was a fearful compound fracture of the thigh. The wounds in his face and head were immediately properly dressed and bandaged, and the fracture reduced, but not placed in splints, from the fear of inflammation. Still, although certainly alive he showed no signs of consciousness, and every thing proved him to be in a situation of intense danger.

Mrs. Beauchamp was immediately sent for, and that amiable woman, forgetting all former provocations, immediately returned to the rectory. Her husband was ordered to be kept in a state of perfect quietness; and if consciousness returned, no questions were to be asked him, nor any thing brought under his notice which would be likely to irritate or even to interest him. Mrs. Beauchamp was particularly requested to conceal herself from her husband till he should be so sufficiently recovered as not to incur any danger of a relapse or shock from the surprise.

In a few days Mr. Beauchamp was sufficiently recovered from his wounds in his head as to be allowed to converse with moderation; but the injury to his leg was a far more serious affair. It still remained doubtful whether it ought not to be amputated at the hip joint; always a most dangerous operation, but which, with his dilapidated constitution, would almost to a certainty prove fatal. Perfect quietude and obedience to the

orders of his medical attendant could alone save him, and of this fact he was fully informed by those around him. Spirits and wine were, perhaps somewhat contrary to the frequent practice in cases of the kind, ordered to be kept strictly from him; and the order was as strictly obeyed, though not without some difficulty, as the terrible craving came over him, which, after a few days' abstinence, is so dangerous to the drunkard's good resolutions. Still those about him kept true to their duty, and the sick man pleaded in vain. By degrees his constitution became stronger, and he, with occasional exceptions appeared almost resigned to his privations. He was also aware of the presence of his wife in the house. Their meeting was characteristic of both. Mr. Beauchamp, naturally kind-hearted and affectionate, essayed to speak, but could not find words. He cast one look of intense love on his wife, and then turning his head on his pillow, burst into tears. His wife kissed him, but said nothing. She afterwards continued by his bedside, a faithful, loving, gentle nurse; and not one word nor action on her part could have led the most cautious observer to believe that an unkind word or misunderstanding had ever passed between them. Aware, perfectly aware, as she was that the unfortunate habit of drinking which had taken possession of her husband had been the cause of his unfortunate behavior, she was unceasingly on her guard that no spirits should be brought to him, although her woman's tact managed so cleverly to hide the surveillance she placed upon him that he never suspected for a moment that she was concerned in it, or that it existed beyond the obedience observed to the doctor's orders.

By degrees Mr. Beauchamp became apparently cured of the detestable habit, and with its loss his habitual

kindness and affection for his wife returned. Mrs. Beauchamp now every morning read prayers in his room, and they appeared to afford him great consolation. The recovery of his health was slow, very slow, so that it was more than four months after the accident before he was able to leave his room.

One morning, a few days after he was removed to the library, he requested his wife to send for her solicitor, the one who had conducted the lunacy commission against him. His wife, though greatly surprised at the request, without hesitation obeyed him, and the next day that gentleman arrived. He was shown into the library, where Mr. Beauchamp was alone. The reception he gave the solicitor was most courteous. As soon as the first commonplace phrases of new acquaintanceship had passed over, Mr. Beauchamp opened the subject he wished to speak with him upon.

"I have been wishing," he said, "for some time past for an opportunity to speak with you about the commission of lunacy you conducted against me; but as it is not a pleasant subject to speak on, I have delayed it from day to day; now I have no time to lose, as I hope I shall soon be sufficiently recovered in my bodily health to leave the house. Do not imagine I have the slightest animosity against you or any one connected with your side of the commission; on the contrary, I now feel grateful to you all, for I am fully persuaded you were actuated by the kindest feeling towards me. Still, the idea of my being deprived of my liberty, as well as of those stimulants which I had imagined had become almost a second nature to me, made me oppose you. I now view the matter in a new and perfectly true light. I am convinced I have conducted myself in a way to entail disgrace, if not infamy, on my name, as well as to

throw a slur on the sacred profession of which I am a member. I am now, I hope, perfectly cured of my unhappy propensity, but, at the same time, I fear it is possible I may again be tempted to indulge in it. I now, therefore, request you to find me some asylum in which I may be removed from all temptation, till sobriety shall have become chronic in me. Do not, I beg of you, think of again opening the commission. So far from my offering any opposition, I will joyfully enter any asylum you may propose to me, but spare me the mortification of making my infirmity known to the world."

The solicitor readily promised he would obey him.

"I will leave it to you," continued Mr. Beauchamp, "to inform my dear wife of my determination. It would be too painful a subject for me to introduce to her. Tell her also, wherever I may be, I trust she will take apartments in the immediate neighborhood, so that I may have the happiness of seeing her daily. To you, also, I will leave the task of arranging my affairs. Though still far from being a poor man, I am afraid that you will find them in a far worse state than you imagine. At the same time, while you are occupied on them, I rely on you as a gentleman, should any thing appear in them likely to give annoyance to my wife beyond the loss of the money, that you will maintain from her my secret. I have no reason to believe that any such exist, but, at the same time, I am ready to admit that occasionally my mind has been in such a state that I may have compromised myself in a way that I might now blush at."

This also was readily promised by the solicitor, and the interview terminated. Mrs. Beauchamp was immediately informed of her husband's resolution. She received the news almost with satisfaction, as she was now fully aware of the perfect reformation of her husband.

The solicitor then occupied himself in finding a proper asylum, and Shirley Hall was decided on. A short time afterwards, allowing it to be understood that he was leaving home for the benefit of his health, Mr. Beauchamp entered the asylum as a patient. He soon became a favorite with us all. There was something peculiarly attractive and interesting in his quiet, subdued manner. His wife, who visited the asylum daily, also became a great favorite with us; and she frequently made one of the members of our little evening reunions.

CHAPTER X.

STORY OF A CLERGYMAN WHO APPLIED TO THE DEVIL FOR CONSOLATION AND RECEIVED IT—AND THE RESULTS.—CONTINUED.

A SHORT time after Mr. Beauchamp's arrival, he gave the doctor a succinct and true narrative of the manner his unfortunate habit of drinking to excess, till it became insanity, commenced:

"Before," he said, "the death of my poor boy, I flatter myself I had never, in one single instance, overstepped the bounds of moderation. True, I always liked conviviality, but I could always stop when propriety ordered it. I can clearly trace the first step that led to my fall. It was when the dreadful intelligence of my poor boy's death first reached me. I was nearly falling from the effect it had upon me, when the doctor, who was one of my guests, rose from the table, and offered me a glass of wine to support me. The effect was instantaneous, and it gave me the strength to inform my wife of the horrible disaster which had befallen us. I stayed with her the whole of the night trying to calm her sorrow, while, at the time, my own was overwhelming. You cannot imagine the misery of that terrible night. It now appears to me more like a fearful dream than as a reality. Almost every thing I had lived for seemed gone. You cannot imagine a more profound love than I had for my boy. He was the darling of both my wife and myself. His future career had a thousand times been

painted by me in colors so bright that the anticipation alone seemed a reality. Now all my hopes had vanished, and in place of the flattering perspective I had drawn, a long vista of overwhelming grief was before me. Memory itself seemed bent on continuing my anguish. All that dreadful night long he was perpetually appearing before me. He was there as at the moment he was presented to the commander-in-chief, when I looked on him with pride, as he stood erect in his boyish imitation of a soldier's bearing, and as beautiful and noble a type of budding manhood as the Almighty had ever formed. Thus, and thus only, did he appear to me, but as distinctly visible as in life itself.

"During the whole of the time, the cries of my poor wife were unceasing. My friend, who had brought us the intelligence, tried to console her, but her grief was too terrible for reason to assuage. Presently, without premeditation, I left the room and entered the library. It was almost in darkness, receiving light only from the hall lamp when the room door was open. The dim obscurity acted oppressively upon me, and my sorrow became still more overwhelming. I threw myself on a chair, and, placing my face in my hands, I bent forward on the table, and wept aloud. I then determined I would pray to heaven for help. I had hardly formed the idea when some one touched me on the shoulder. It was the doctor. He held in his hand a decanter of wine and a tumbler.

"'I beg your pardon,' said he, 'but you had better take a glass of wine. You will, believe me, require all your energies, and you will hardly be able to do so without some artificial support. Do take my advice, and then go back to Mrs. Beauchamp.'

"I was on the point of refusing him, but he had poured

it out, and I mechanically took it from his hand and drank it off. Immediately the idea of prayer vanished, and, the cry of my wife catching my ear, I went again to her room.

"In this manner I passed the whole of that night. Morning brought no relief—that which in the night appeared almost as a terrible dream, the light of day proved to be a stern reality. My friend took upon himself the arrangements for the funeral. We had a family vault in Harrow church-yard, and it was decided that my poor boy should be buried there. The coroner's inquest was held, and the funeral was to take place a few days afterwards. When I left the rectory, I took a sad leave of my broken-hearted wife. Let me, at the same time, tell the whole truth. Ever since that terrible night, whenever fits of despondency came over me, I had had recourse to stimulants instead of prayer for support and comfort. Not that I loved my boy the less, but the sting of sorrow was blunted by the spirit I swallowed, and, coward-like, each time my misery threatened to be too strong for me to bear, I applied to the detestable remedy again for relief.

"I arrived at Harrow the day before the funeral was to take place. I cannot explain for what reason, but a terrible dread of being present at the ceremony came over me. It attacked me the night before I left home, and, as I approached London, it appeared to become stronger. I seemed to fear that I might give way to some irrepressible burst of sorrow, and that I should sink under it. During the evening of my arrival, the feeling became so painful that I took an opportunity of leaving the house, without others being aware of my temporary absence. I then purchased a bottle of brandy, and, concealing it carefully, returned home. When I had reached

my bed-room, I placed the bottle on a table, and, having seated myself on a chair, I tried to collect my thoughts. Not for a minute together could I force my mind to remain fixed on one point. I determined on tasting the spirit, but, as I was taking the cork from the bottle, a servant tapped at the door, and asked me if I would like to attend the evening family prayers. The sound of the girl's voice acted in an extraordinary manner upon me. Had I been a thief and had stolen a treasure, I could not have been more terrified at being surprised by an officer than I was at the kind tone of the poor girl's voice. I rose hurriedly from my seat, seized the bottle, and in a moment concealed it in my portmanteau which lay open at my feet. I then rose and stood trembling without answering her. She again knocked and repeated her message. This brought me to my senses, and, with a hesitating voice, I requested her to ask her master to excuse me that evening. As soon as the girl's footsteps were heard descending the stair, I again seated myself. A new feeling came over me; it was one of horror and disgust at my own conduct. I resolved I would not drink; and yet I could not pray, although I attempted it. At last I sought my bed, and remained in it, half-sleeping, half-waking, till morning.

"I had hardly finished dressing the next morning before the servant informed me that breakfast was ready. When I had descended into the breakfast-room, I found the whole family assembled together for prayer. My sensation of yesterday returned immediately I found myself among them. The window-shutters, though nearly closed, were sufficiently apart to allow all objects in the room to be perfectly visible. The eyes of all present, I felt, were upon me, examining me attentively. I was received by my host and his wife with their usual

kindness, but there was an air of pity about them which irritated me exceedingly. I cannot now imagine why it should have been so, unless the great quantity of stimulants I had made use of for some days had brought my mind into a morbid state, utterly repugnant to my natural disposition.

"At breakfast, the conversation was conducted in the same sad tone; little, however, was said, and silence prevailed, almost unbroken, during the latter part of the meal. After breakfast, my friend conducted me into his library.

"'Beauchamp,' he said, 'the funeral will take place at twelve o'clock, till then you will doubtless like to have the time at your own disposal, I will give orders that you shall not be intruded on by any one. Your poor boy, as you are aware, lies in the room beside us. The next two hours, then, you will have to yourself. Let me advise you to seek courage and support, for the terrible trial you will have to go through, from whence only true comfort can be obtained.'

"The last sentence he appeared to utter in a very significant tone and manner. Perhaps, after all, I was mistaken.

"'I will now leave you,' he continued, 'but I will inform you when it is time for us to make preparations to leave the house.'

"He then left me to my solitude. I sat for some little time in the partial obscurity of the room, favorable enough for reflection, but my mind incessantly wandered. At last I determined to return to my own bed-room; why, I dared not even whisper to myself. I passed the room in which my poor boy lay. The door was closed. I put my hand upon the handle, and a feeling of the most intense sorrow immediately came over me. So ter-

rible was it I almost sank under it. I did not weep, but a stifling hysterical sensation came over me, which almost deprived me of breath. Again I determined to seek my room, and but for a moment, and I would then return. Even while making this resolution, I concealed from myself the real motive which induced me to act so, as if ashamed of the deed I was about to commit.

"I entered my bed-room, and instinctively and mechanically opened my portmanteau, and took out the bottle of brandy, then pouring out some in a tumbler, I took a prolonged draught. Its effects seemed almost miraculous, the stifling sensation under which I had been laboring vanished in an instant. I now seated myself without any definite intention, and remained for some time with my mind in a most extraordinary state. I felt no sorrow. Objects totally unconnected with the terrible misfortune which had befallen me came flitting before me in rapid succession. I do not believe one thought of my poor boy was among them. After remaining for some time in this state I heard the clock strike eleven, and this warned me that but another hour remained. I rose from my chair and determined on bracing up my mind for the occasion. I walked hurriedly, for some minutes, to and fro, in the room, and then resolved on visiting the one in which my poor son lay. Before doing so, I mechanically took up the bottle, and pouring out some of the spirit, I drank it off. It strengthened me greatly, but I appeared to forget my intention of leaving the room. I now wished it was time for the funeral to commence; my courage and spirits were equal to the task, and I was quite ready. I occupied my mind with every subject I could bring before me, but, in spite of all my efforts, not one would remain on it for a moment with any consistency.

"The bell commenced tolling. I knew the time had come, and I immediately made some slight hurried additions to my toilet. A servant tapped at my door, and told me that her master was waiting for me. I was on the point of leaving the room when I found that I had left the bottle standing on the table. It immediately occurred to me how discreditable it would appear if the servant found it, and I advanced towards it to place it in concealment. As I took it in my hand the temptation again came over me and I poured out some of its contents in a glass. As I was doing so, the servant again summoned me, and the continual tolling of the bell informed me for what object. I raised hastily the glass to my lips, and as I did so, the idea, with singular force and clearness, flashed across my mind, that I was seeking aid and consolation from the devil.

"I hurried out of my room and entered the dining-parlor. I there found my friend and two of my poor boy's fellow-pupils. They were both introduced to me. There was so singular an expression of surprise on their faces when they saw me that I have never forgotten it. Presently the slow, heavy, measured tread of some men outside the room-door told too well the task they were employed upon. At that moment I found that my friend had his eyes fixed on my face with an expression of wonder and displeasure. My attention was the next moment diverted by the undertaker and his assistants bringing in our hats with the symbols of mourning upon them, and immediately afterwards, the sad procession was formed, and we entered the mourning coaches.

"I do not know why it should have occurred, but I felt angry with my friend, not only for the expression on his countenance before I had left the room, but also for the inflexible manner his gaze was turned from me

during our road to the church. The same feeling continued the whole time the ceremony lasted. I was under what might be termed an unaccountable apathy, had not a certain amount of angry feeling rendered such a term inappropriate. Nevertheless, I was perfectly sensible of the terrible duty I was performing, for the words, 'This is my beloved son! this is my beloved son!' kept passing through my brain without any termination to the sentence.

"When we returned to the house, I went immediately to my room. A feeling of shame was over me, which I attempted to drown by angrily fixing my thoughts on my friend, but, as time advanced, the feeling of anger diminished, and that of shame increased. I threw myself on my bed, and, without sleeping, I fell into a sort of stupor. I was recalled from it by a servant asking from the passage, whether I would have candles. (It was then nearly dark.) I declined the offer, and I requested she would inform her master that I hoped he would excuse my being present at the dinner-table that day. I now drew back the blinds, and, with the little light that remained, I walked to and fro in my room. A very different feeling was now coming over me—one of deep depression. I thought now of my poor boy with the affection he merited. All his noble qualities presented themselves in rapid succession before me; all now hopelessly, irrecoverably lost. His poor mother, too; what, at that moment, were her sufferings! What would be our mutual feelings when we should meet again the next day! This train of thought continued uninterrupted till I was no longer master of my sorrow, and I flung myself on my bed and wept bitterly. Oh! how different were my feelings at that moment from what they were when I stood beside his grave! I now

viewed my conduct with horror and disgust. I now understood full well my friend's look of anger. I felt myself degraded, and this added to my anguish, and humbly and earnestly I prayed to the Almighty for support and comfort, and to be forgiven from the sin I had committed in seeking consolation from the enemy of souls. I prayed the more earnestly when I remembered that when last I placed the glass to my lips, the thought that I was seeking help from that source from which only evil can come, and from one who never gave aid without demanding a sin in return, for the assistance given.

"That night I did not close my eyes; and when, the next morning, I left my room to attend family prayers, I believe my altered appearance struck my host forcibly, for he received me in the most friendly manner. In the afternoon a post-chaise was brought to the door. My preparations for the journey were soon accomplished, and, after taking an affectionate leave of my esteemed friend and his family, I started for my home.

"It was late at night when I arrived. The roads were bad, and I was detained more than two hours at the last stage, there being no horses ready. While there, I was obliged to take some refreshment, for I found myself greatly fatigued. They prepared me a dinner, and brought me a list of wines. I ordered some claret, but I drank but very moderately of it; nevertheless, I felt support from it. When I arrived at home, I received the intelligence that my poor wife was prostrated by a low nervous fever, and was ordered by the doctor to be kept very quiet. I immediately desired another room to be prepared for me; and as she had not been informed of my arrival, I determined on delaying to see her till the next morning.

"Our meeting the next day, God knows, was sad enough, and long and bitterly we wept over our loss. At last, we were disturbed by the information that the doctor had arrived. He was admitted, but he found my wife no better. This was easily accounted for—the exertion and the renewal of her sorrow, excited by my return, had most probably contributed to make her symptoms more unfavorable.

"I left my wife's room with the doctor, and we entered the dining-room, where lunch was prepared for him. He then went through the particulars of my wife's case, and told me she must not be allowed to 'sink;' in fact, that every means must be taken to keep her strength up. He also told me that I must follow the same course myself, or I might be thrown upon a bed of sickness.

"I promised to follow his advice, but how to accomplish it was the difficult point. The small quantity which would be beneficial to my wife would be inert on me, accustomed as I had always been to live well. It therefore occurred to me that a greater amount of stimulus was necessary to keep away any depression of mind or body in me than would have been necessary for a strictly abstemious man. As I became accustomed to the increased quantity, I was obliged to take more; and this again increased, till you unfortunately or fortunately received me as a patient.

"But now let me speak on the phases of my unfortunate habit as they bear on your profession. As I increased the quantity of stimulants, the idea which crossed my mind the day of my son's funeral, the more frequently occurred to me—that I was seeking aid from the devil. No matter how great the quantity I had taken, no matter how confused my thoughts were on other subjects, on that they were perfectly clear—that I was binding

myself to the devil, and that every excess I committed was but a ratification of the bargain. By degrees this idea increased, till I became impressed with the notion that it was too late to retreat, that I was obliged to continue in the course, and that no repentance nor resistance on my part would avail. Often and often did I attempt to break the chain, but always without success. I was obliged to drink, and when I had drunk, I plunged into dissipation and extravagance, utterly hateful to my feelings. In these orgies, in the gambling-house or on the race-course, I never felt real pleasure, but I was drawn there by a temptation I could not withstand. I knew perfectly well that I was degrading myself, that I was bringing religion into contempt and losing my own soul, yet all attempts to break from my thraldom were useless, and at last I recklessly yielded to my doom, and carried my impiety to the extent of administering the services of religion in my church, when, before entering it, I had drank almost to intoxication; and, during the prayers I was apparently offering up, a voice was whispering in my ear that I had sold myself to the fiend.

"When my accident occurred, and I found it impossible to continue drinking, the idea that Satan would claim me again as soon as I was well haunted me still, nor could I for a long time debarass myself from the idea. Although it has now gone, still I fear a relapse, though probably without reason, for I hold my late course of life in abhorrence. I know now perfectly well the folly of the idea of a compact with the evil one, but when I remember how long I have been suffering under that terrible delusion, it is only natural that I should wish to have sufficient permanent strength of mind to ridicule the idea of its return; and under your care I am certain I shall obtain it."

CHAPTER XI.

STORY OF A CLERGYMAN WHO APPLIED TO THE DEVIL FOR CONSOLATION AND RECEIVED IT—AND THE RESULTS.—CONCLUSION.

Mr. Beauchamp remained with us for more than a year, and during the whole time, I believe he did not elicit an unfriendly feeling from any one, even of the most trifling description. Never had a man in this world greater facilities for making himself liked, and no one, during his sojourn with us, could have used those advantages with greater success. Every trace of his malady had vanished long before he left us; and, in fact, as the doctor admitted, had it not been for the delusion of Satan again claiming him, there never would have been the necessity for his residence among us. The doctor, however was excessively cautious before he gave him a clean bill of health. He allowed him, at first, occasionally, but afterwards more frequently, to walk out with Mrs. Beauchamp, the latter having especial instructions to avoid all conversation on the subject of his malady. He feared she might argue with him as treating his delusion in a theological point of view, instead of considering it in its right light, purely physiological. Afterwards, the doctor allowed his patient to walk out occasionally alone, always questioning him on his return whether the wish for drinking ever arose on his passing an inn or public house. All the questions were answered, and evidently truly so, in the negative, and at last the doctor was con-

firmed in his opinion that his patient was perfectly cured. Mr. Beauchamp then left the asylum, not only in his right mind, but in every respect perfectly capable of managing his own affairs, and resuming the spiritual duties of his parish. It was a day of mourning for us all when he left us, and for many weeks afterwards we continued to feel his loss.

We heard nothing more of Mr. Beauchamp for three years, and then accident only threw the news in our way. A mutual friend of his and the doctor's called at the asylum one day, and dined with us in the afternoon. In the course of conversation Mr. Beauchamp's name was mentioned. The visitor immediately inquired from what part of the country he came. He was informed, and it proving to be the same individual with whom he had been on friendly terms, we obtained from him the continuation of the poor man's history.

After leaving Shirley Hall, Mr. Beauchamp had returned to his living. His arrival naturally occasioned great excitement, and many of his parishioners called on him. Mrs. Beauchamp, however, noticed, with some alarm, that the majority of those who appeared most delighted at his return, were precisely those whose acquaintance she most dreaded, fearing they might have a prejudicial effect on her husband's future behavior. She did him, unwittingly, a great injustice. No man ever traced out for himself a course he intended to pursue more determinately than did Mr. Beauchamp in the present instance. He endeavored to conduct himself, in every respect, in a way worthy of a country pastor, and he succeeded. It is true his charities were not as liberal as they had formerly been, but there was a good excuse for their decrease. His estate had been so injured by his gambling transactions and other debts, that it was

absolutely necessary he should, for the first few years, practise the greatest economy in his expenditure. But if his charities were less liberal, they were applied with greater caution and better discretion than formerly; those now receiving most who deserved most, while only those of the most unworthy felt the deficiency. His establishment, also, was now conducted on a totally different principle. Where formerly the most profuse extravagance reigned, now the strictest economy supplied its place. The dinner-parties were now seldom held, and when they were, only the most temperate and respectable of his parishioners were invited.

It would be imagined that a course of life so just and Christian-like would have pleased all; but, on the contrary, it excited considerable dissatisfaction among many of those who had been his principal supporters during the era of his reckless extravagance. The absence of his dinner-parties now began to open their eyes to his former faults, and many of his acts, to which they had closed their eyes, were now seen by them in their true light. By many of the more respectable his faults had never been forgiven, but, if they were unbending, they were at least consistent. His church now became almost deserted when he officiated, and all, with the exception of a very few, took the opportunity of expressing their displeasure at his continuance in the parish. At last, it was impossible for the bishop of the diocese longer to close his eyes to this unhappy state of affairs. He wrote to Mr. Beauchamp, and requested he would call on him, as he had something of importance he wished to communicate to him. Mr. Beauchamp instinctively knew on what subject it was, but he waited on the bishop as desired, and he then learnt what he had already anticipated: "That it would be better for Mr. Beauchamp's

own peace of mind, as well as the interests of the Church, if he resigned his living, or, at least, made such arrangements as would allow its spiritual duties to be conducted by others. He suggested that Mr. Beauchamp should reside, say on the Continent, for some time, and then, no doubt, the unfortunate impression which now prevailed would diminish, till, at last, it would be entirely lost." Mr. Beauchamp was convinced that his lordship's advice was most judicious, and promised exactly to follow it. On arriving at home, he explained to his wife all that had taken place, and she perfectly agreed in the advice the bishop had given.

Preparations were soon made for their leaving the rectory. Mr. Beauchamp placed in the hands of the senior curate, a man much liked, the management of the parish. The rectory was allowed him as a residence till arrangements could be made for the sale of the books and furniture, which, however, was not to take place till full opportunity had been had to dispose of them by private contract. All was at last in readiness, the childless couple left their home of many years, and took up their residence in the vicinity of the town of Caen, in Normandy.

They resided there for more than a twelvemonth, liked and respected by all who knew them. Their circle of acquaintances was not large, but estimable and respectable. They consisted principally of English families, who were residing abroad, partly for economy, partly for the purpose of educating their children. As in most English communities in the north of France at that time, there were also many other English residents who had left their country for debts or less creditable reasons, but of these the Beauchamps knew none, or, at least, not beyond the ordinary civility of salutation in passing.

At the end of the first year, the books and furniture not having been disposed of by private contract, Mrs. Beauchamp determined they should be sold by auction. This was readily assented to by her husband, but as he did not like again visiting the rectory, he proposed that his wife should go over to England and superintend the arrangements for the sale. To this she at first demurred, as being but little acquainted with business matters, but, on communicating with her trustee, she found he would kindly assist her in every way, and she withdrew her objection and started for England.

It required a residence of more than six weeks in England for Mrs. Beauchamp thoroughly to terminate the business she had come upon. At last it was perfectly and satisfactorily concluded, and, after spending a few days at the house of her trustee, for whose exertions in her behalf she was under a heavy debt of gratitude, she returned to France. A somewhat boisterous passage had considerably fatigued her, and it was with no little sensation of pleasure that she again reached her home. She was somewhat surprised at not finding her husband at the diligence office, when she arrived, to receive her, but without difficulty she procured a guide, for it was now dark, to escort her. Arrived at the house, she found it open, for the servant had, for the moment, left it, and the door was ajar. The dining-room door was partly opened; finding lights in it, she entered. The room was in some disorder. Evidently two or three persons had dined there, for their glasses were still upon the table, and, what was far more terrible to Mrs. Beauchamp, several empty bottles. On an easy-chair near the fire, with his back to the door, fast asleep, was her husband. Mrs. Beauchamp advanced and gazed at him, then, with one hand leaning on the back of his chair, she, with the

other, covered her eyes. Presently the big tears were seen to fall rapidly beneath it. They were many and bitter, and the offspring of sorrow and shame. That sleep of her husband's there was no mistaking. It was not the sleep of the tired man reposing after the fatigues of the day; the red, bloated face, the swollen eyes, and the deep, heavy breathing, told too truly it was the torpid, sleepy stupor of the drunkard laboring under the effects of a scarcely-terminated debauch. Presently the servant entered. "*Tiens, c'est madame!*" she exclaimed, with an accent of surprise. "*Oh! que je suis contente de vous voir.*" She gave a glance at Mrs. Beauchamp which spoke volumes, as she somewhat roughly shook the drunkard by the arm to arouse him.

Slowly and heavily he partially recovered from his stupor. He raised his heavy eyelids with difficulty, and it was some minutes before he could fully realize the fact of his wife's presence. He appeared at first as if he identified her with some dream that had been crossing his mind at the time the servant disturbed him. "*Mais, monsieur, vous voyez bien que madame est arrivée,*" said the girl. Mr. Beauchamp then began to comprehend the truth. He rose with great difficulty, and with his hands placed on the arms of his chair. He stood staggering, or rather balancing himself for a moment, staring wildly at her the while. He then passed his hand across his brow, and a grotesque appearance of shame came on his face. He attempted to speak, but had too much difficulty in arranging his words to make himself understood. Presently he articulated two or three times the words, "Swept and garnished—swept and garnished." He then sank in his chair, and fell into a sort of stupor. The maid-servant called her husband from the kitchen. He saluted Mrs. Beauchamp, but said nothing. Then he

and his wife took the drunkard in their arms, and carried him off to bed.

Presently the servant descended, and found poor Mrs. Beauchamp almost heart-broken. The kind-hearted Frenchwoman tried all in her power to console her, but with little success. Later she became a little calmer, and listened with intense pain to her servant's statement.

Shortly after Mrs. Beauchamp had left France, her husband met an old gambling acquaintance. Mr. Beauchamp endeavored to avoid him, but the fellow introduced himself for the purpose of asking the particulars of some gambling transaction, in which they had both been engaged. It seems that both Mr. Beauchamp and the stranger had lost money on a horse to a third party. Mr Beauchamp had paid his own, and the stranger also maintained he had acquitted his loss at the same time. Mr. Beauchamp, however, did not remember the circumstance, and the question, for the moment, dropped, but the acquaintance had been renewed. A few days afterwards, the stranger called and begged Mr. Beauchamp would make one of a party of four, who were to have a carriage among them, to attend a horse-race in the neighborhood. Mr. Beauchamp at first declined, but his friend pressed him so strongly, that it aroused his curiosity so much to see a French race-course, that at last he consented. That evening he was brought home quite drunk. The next day the stranger called, and finding Mr. Beauchamp somewhat indisposed, the old remedy of "the hair of the dog that bit you" was proposed and accepted! It may appear singular that Mr. Beauchamp, who had so long refrained from wine, should compromise himself so readily, but a spell seemed to be over him. He had broken his resolution, and he now seemed to succumb without the power of resistance.

In short, before his wife returned, he had again acquired every bad quality he had formerly possessed.

His wife attempted to reason with him, but in vain. He made her many promises, and then broke them again as soon as he was from her sight. She then attempted to accompany him when he left the house, but he frequently contrived to elude her. Unfortunately, drinking brought on gambling and immorality, and Mrs. Beauchamp had no alternative but of again applying to her trustee for advice and protection. It was time, for her husband was fast spending and gambling away all that they possessed. The trustee arrived, and it was with some difficulty that he contrived to secure for Mrs. Beauchamp sufficient to purchase her an annuity of two hundred pounds a year out of the splendid fortune she and her husband once possessed. She shortly afterwards left France, Mr. Beauchamp offering no opposition, for it was in fact impossible for her longer to remain in the house, so disgraceful were the associates her husband frequently brought into it.

After his wife had left him, the unhappy man gave full sway to his insanity. At times, however, the idea of his degradation seemed to haunt him. He would occasionally try, by a simulated respectability of manner, to pay some respect to his position, but he soon again relapsed. At last he was attacked by *delirium tremens;* and he suffered greatly from that terrible malady. Amidst his incoherency, the expression he had made use of on his wife's return from England, "Swept and garnished," was continually uttered by him. The disease ran on so strongly, it was impossible for his dilapidated constitution to stem it; and at last he sank beneath it, finding too late at what price the devil gives aid and consolation to those in misfortune.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CYNIC.

The next of my fellow-sufferers whom I shall introduce to my readers is a Mr. Walter Robinson, an Irishman by birth, although he had resided almost all his life in England, and a gentleman by nature. He had travelled much, was exceedingly well read, although somewhat irregularly educated. He had been for many years connected with literature, in which profession he had obtained an honorable and well-earned reputation. A few years before I made his acquaintance, he had inherited a small property of about two hundred pounds a year, but before that his life seems to have been one of incessant mental and bodily labor, and occasionally of considerable privation as well. He was evidently exceedingly prolific with his pen; and there was hardly any subject, serious or comic, sacred or profane, on which he could not write or converse with good taste and ability. Though naturally kind-hearted, he was somewhat cynical in disposition; and this failing, which I found afterwards had developed itself in his youth, had increased as he advanced in years. Like most young writers, in early life he had taken to the lighter branches of literature, and chance throwing him in the way of some eminent publishers of comic periodicals, he was principally occupied in the first four or five years of his career on writings of that character. Although the search after the ridiculous was greatly to his taste, it

may well be doubted whether, in the end, it contributed much to his comfort and happiness. I am inclined to think it did not, for the dominant fault in his character, cynicism, had been rather increased than diminished by it.

He seemed to consider that the ridiculous was mixed up with every action of life, however serious; and his labors as a comic writer obliging him to be incessantly hunting after the absurd, made cynicism in him almost a second nature.

This feeling increased in him, till it appears to have arrived at insanity. When his disease was at its highest, he was in the habit of bursting into violent fits of laughter in places of worship, and at funerals, and disturbing the congregation and mourners in a manner which would have been utterly disgraceful, had not his misfortune been for him an ample excuse. Naturally there was nothing of the irreverent in his character; on the contrary, he appeared to hold every Christian sect and its ministers in marked respect, but the ridiculous being the comparison between a sublime and a mean object, he, in his unfortunate state of mind, found more for his disease to feed upon in church than in any other locality. Even in the height of his malady, he was aware of the impropriety of his conduct; but he was acted upon, he said, by so strong a temptation to enter places of worship, and there to conduct himself in a disorderly manner, that he had not the power to withstand it.

The doctor told me there was no difficulty in tracing out the culminating point of Mr. Robinson's disease, namely, immense mental labor while engaged as a writer of leading articles for a morning paper, combined with his other literary occupations, and (as the truth must be told) an unfortunate habit he had acquired of seeking

inspiration and assistance from the bottle, although he had never disgraced himself by acquiring the character of a drunkard.

For a short time after his admission into the asylum his spirits sank, and there was some danger of his disease terminating in melancholia, but it afterwards appeared that this depression was caused solely by his forced abstinence from wine, and he soon recovered his natural gayety. He improved rapidly during his stay with us, and in a few months he again returned to his avocation, his insanity certainly cured, although his large stock of cynicism had only remained in abeyance. I had contrived, during his stay in the asylum, to gain his confidence; in fact, we had become intimate friends.

From time to time he gave me sketches of his life; some of them were exceedingly singular.

The following episodes in his history, as narrated by himself, will perhaps give an idea of the man, though, of course, they were not told off at one sitting.

"I know you think me," he said, "exceedingly absurd, and that I am always in search of the ridiculous, but I assure you that naturally it is not my disposition. I should say that there are few that are of a more serious temperament than I am, or who could dwell with greater interest on the pathetic.

"My temper is now the effect of education and habit, and is totally different from what nature originally made it. From my earliest childhood the ridiculous has thrust itself into every action of my life, and that in direct opposition to my will. I have been haunted through my whole existence by the absurd, and without the slightest power on my own part to avoid it. The feeling is connected with my earliest remembrances. I was left an orphan at a very early age; in fact, I remember neither

father nor mother. I was very poor indeed. An old uncle of mine, a retired clerk in a public office, took me into his house, almost as an act of charity. He was an old bachelor of a morose, taciturn disposition, but an honorable, humane man at heart. He lived in Lambeth, many parts of which were, in those days, of a far more rural description than at present. He placed me under the care of an old housekeeper of his, who was, in general, exceedingly kind to me. I saw but little of my uncle, and, as his presence always inspired me with awe, I cannot say I much regretted the circumstance.

"The first blow my feelings of romance experienced, was while I was under my uncle's care. At the time I am speaking of, I might have been between seven and eight years of age. My nurse had some acquaintance with a person employed at the Surrey Theatre, and, through his patronage, she occasionally obtained orders for the pit, on which occasions I generally accompanied her.

"One piece, which I saw several times, used to make a great impression on me. I forget the name of it, but it struck me as being exceedingly grand and magnificent, and its attraction rather increased than diminished as I saw it the oftener. I even now remember the awe and admiration with which I used to regard the principal performers. One among them was an especial object of interest. She was the benevolent power of the piece,—a just and magnificent queen. Her virtues, in my eyes, were very possibly increased by her personal appearance. She was a tall, portly, handsome woman, with a sweet, clear voice. I remember also that she had a beautiful set of teeth; indeed, she would not have been to blame had I forgotten the circumstance, for she took every possible opportunity of showing them to their fullest extent. No

matter what sentence she might be giving utterance to, whether tragic or comic, laughing or weeping, jesting or scolding, her teeth were always to be seen. Her dress also contributed greatly to the respect I bore her; it was as magnificent as stage velvet and Dutch metal could make it, and the crown she wore, the queen of the Indies might have envied.

"The splendor and majesty of this woman fairly haunted me, till one day the illusion vanished. I was walking one fine sunshiny morning with my nurse in a street at the back of Bethlem hospital. We were at the moment passing a row of small, poor, four-roomed houses, with little gardens in front, separated from each other and the road by short, rickety wooden palings. From one of the houses emerged a tall, shabbily-dressed old woman, with a basket on her arm. She took the same direction as ourselves, but, as we had not reached her when she left the garden-gate, we, of course, followed her. Suddenly the door of the same house opened again, and a slatternly, slip-shod, dirty little girl rushed out of it after the old woman, screaming at the top of her voice, 'Grandmother, we want butter.' The old woman, hearing the child's voice, turned round, and I had a full view of her features. They were perfectly well known to me, but I could not at the moment remember where I had seen them.

"'That's Mrs. B——, "the queen" in the piece you saw at the theatre last night,' my nurse whispered to me.

"I was thunderstruck. At first I believed it to be impossible, but a second glance at the poverty-struck creature proved it to be a fact. That shabby, sharp-voiced old woman was the mild-toned, magnificent queen of the evening before.

"My second great disappointment I also met at the

theatre. It occurred when I was between eleven and twelve years of age. My uncle had placed me at a day school in the neighborhood, to which I went every morning, and returned in the evening. The happiest hours of my childhood, contrary to the experience of most boys, I passed when at that school, not that there was any thing particularly attractive in my daily routine, but my life at home was exceedingly monotonous and solitary. At school, at any rate, I had companions; at home I had none, with the exception of the old nurse, and a mongrel terrier of the name of Rover. My holidays were particularly desolate, for I had no acquaintances, my uncle not allowing me to receive any of my school-fellows at home; and I had too much pride to visit at the houses of others when I could not offer them any return at my own.

"Occasionally, it is true, I had a treat to the theatre, the acquaintance of the old nurse of whom I have already spoken still holding his appointment, although the manager had removed him to the Lyceum Theatre. A piece at that time was performing there which had great attractions for the public. It was called 'The Dog of Montargis; or, the Forest of Bondy.' It had such an effect on me that, although more than fifty years have passed over my head since I saw it, I think I could now repeat every thing which took place in it on the stage. Let me be clearly understood. The human performers in the piece did not possess the charm for me which would have been experienced by most boys of my age, for the broken illusion I have already mentioned had taught me how much deception was before me. But there was one, in fact, the hero of the piece, 'The Dog of Montargis' himself, who entirely won my affections. With him there could be no deceit; all was nature there.

"Another tie had bound me to him, the strong affec-

tion I had for my own dog Rover, the friend and playmate of my solitary hours. Somehow I identified the affection for his master of the dog on the stage, a superb Newfoundland, with my own diminutive terrier. At the same time the qualities of the dog of Montargis far exceeded those of Rover. This I was obliged to admit, although my affection for my dog by no means diminished by the comparison. The instinct of the former was wonderful if not miraculous. He appeared to surpass in intelligence all his biped fellow-actors, and the whole audience, from the applause they gave him, seemed to be of the same opinion.

"The principal business of the piece rested on him. Returning home with his master, through the forest, they were attacked by assassins. After a desperate struggle, in which both the dog and his master showed the greatest courage, the latter fell a victim to his assailants. The dog finding his master slain, after giving vent to his feelings in a lamentable howl over the dead body, rushed from the stage. The next scene represented a street in Bondy. Although it was night there was sufficient light on the stage to discern that the houses were arranged in such a manner that the doors of several were plainly seen in perspective. By the side of each door hung conspicuously a bell-handle.

"Presently the dog made his appearance. In the darkness of the night the sagacious brute could not at first distinguish his home, and he examined two or three of the doors before he was assured that he was at the right. He then seized the bell-handle and rang the bell vigorously. Presently a man-servant hastily dressed, and with a lantern in his hand opened the door. The moment he saw the dog he intuitively understood that something was wrong, and both dog and servant rushed

together across the stage. It now appears to me he rather led the dog than the dog led him, but the objection did not at the time strike me. But the grand effect was in the last scene, where the dog appeared as the principal witness in the trial. Although suspicion was strong against the real assassin, he had contrived to get up an '*alibi*,' which, though his witnesses were disreputable, would in all probability allow him to escape, and thus frustrate the ends of justice, so on the dog was thrown the *onus* of discovering the truth.

"The court was opened; the several accused were placed in a line on one side of the stage, and the judge, officials, and soldiers, were ranged on the other. The dog was then brought in, and he carefully examined the accused. The excitement of the audience at the moment was intense. All seemed almost breathless with expectation. Suddenly the dog sprang on the real villain, seized him by the throat, and dragged him down upon the stage. A terrific burst of applause was the reward the audience gave the intelligent brute for his sagacity and love for his master. The dog's owner, a Frenchman, then came forward and bowed the dog's acknowledgment for the compliment, the intelligent brute the while having his teeth fixed in the murderer's throat, apparently enjoying his vengeance. The Frenchman retired, and the business of the scene went on. The judge admitted the proof of the murderer's guilt, which had been made perfectly clear by the dog's evidence. 'The finger of Heaven,' he said, 'was evidently in the whole affair,' and he concluded by ordering the villain to immediate execution. This, however, was not so easily performed, for when the soldiers advanced to take him away it was with great difficulty they could remove the faithful brute from his throat. The young couple, who-

ever they might have been, for there were a pair of lovers somehow mixed up with the plot, were then and there, without let or hindrance, allowed to marry. They immediately placed themselves in a pious attitude, each with one hand on the head of the dog, the other raised towards the gallery, evidently thanking the gods for their good fortune, and the curtain fell amidst the warm and unanimous plaudits of the audience.

"I think I saw the piece three times without its in the least palling on the senses. Each night after the performance was to me a sleepless one. It would have been absurd for me to have drawn any comparison between that dog's abilities and Rover's with an idea of proving an approach to equality, yet my love for my dog burned as brightly as ever. At last I came to the conclusion that possibly Rover possessed as good natural abilities as his Thespian brother, and that education alone made the difference between them. I well knew how great the difference it made between men, and why should not the rule hold good with dogs?

"After carefully thinking over the matter, and confirming myself in the idea, I determined, as Rover's natural guardian, to repair, as far as possible, the defects in his education. But an impediment arose at the very outset. Before I could teach Rover any points of canine accomplishments, I must be instructed in the art myself. This I resolved, if possible, to do, and I made the old servant the confidant of my resolution. She, of course, could not advise me on the subject, but she promised to consult her theatrical friend, who was, by the by, a check-taker. I awaited with great anxiety the result of her interview with him, which at last took place.

"She informed me that her friend personally had nothing to do with the stage arrangements, but he

would tell one of the carpenters, who understood all about it, and was a very good fellow, to call upon me. I waited impatiently for his visit; at last he came. I laid open to him my wishes, and I told him how happy I should be if Rover could be taught to be as intelligent and faithful as the dog of Montargis—did he think there was any chance of it? of course, under proper instruction.

"'He did.'

"'Could he teach him, or could he instruct me how to teach him? The latter I should prefer of the two.'

"'If your dog, sir,' he said, 'is a dog of ability, he can very easily be taught, but I hardly think it would be fair on my part to tell you how it is done. It is a sort of professional secret.'

"I admired his conscientiousness, but I disagreed with him in his conclusion. I asked him if he had pledged himself to secrecy. He assured me he had not. Then what objection, I argued, could he find; he abused no confidence, and disobeyed no order.

"That was all very true, he said, but still he did not see his way. Of course he would not say he might not do it, as I, who knew better than he, thought the contrary; he also wished very much to oblige me; still, in justice to his conscience, if he did give way, out of good feeling to me, he ought, at least, to have some temptation to form a sort of excuse for his scruples.

"I immediately understood him. My available assets at the time consisted of two shillings, and, as he appeared a very honorably-disposed fellow, I thought they would go but a short way in calming the pangs of his conscience. I was, however, mistaken, for when I asked him what amount he would charge for each lesson or feat, he mentioned the moderate price of one shilling. I was delighted with his answer. I could now teach my dog the two

most interesting tricks I saw the dog of Montargis perform; but, before agreeing to pay for them, I thought it would be but prudent if I introduced Rover to him, and obtained from him his candid opinion whether he considered my dog's natural abilities and qualifications sufficient to allow him to profit by the lesson. The carpenter thought it would be advisable, as it would be useless for me to pay for the lessons if the dog could not learn them, especially as 'No money returned' was a strict rule in the theatrical profession.

"Rover was accordingly introduced, and the carpenter examined him attentively and critically, while I stood by in a state of no little anxiety, waiting for his judgment.

"'The dog will do capitally, sir. I never saw one, leastways judging from his appearance, who could learn faster. What a shame,' he continued, in an under-tone, 'to sarve a poor brute in that manner.'

"I felt exceedingly annoyed at the remark, but, as it was a true one, I said nothing. The meanness of my uncle's housekeeping was visible in poor Rover's ribs, all of which might easily be counted. After a moment's silence on both sides, the carpenter said,

"'Well, sir, is it a bargain? I am agreeable if you are.'

"'It is,' I said, 'and there is the shilling for the first trick.'

"'Which would you like to know, sir?'

"'How the dog of Montargis was taught to ring the right bell.'

"The carpenter put the shilling into his pocket.

"'I will now tell you faithfully, sir, how it is done. I never gets off a bargain. All the bell-pulls in the street is made of wood except the one at his own house, and that's a sausage.'

"'A what?' I almost screamed.

"'A sausage. The poor brute knew his own house by the sausage for the bell-pull; and when he catches hold of it, he naturally rings the bell.'

"'Then I can't teach Rover to ring my bell?'

"'Oh, yes, you could, sir, if you had a sausage tied to the wire; not otherwise. But then I don't know that your servants would much like it, for they would soon have to answer the door pretty often. There is not a dog within a mile round that wouldn't soon find it out, and have a pull at your bell to tell you his master was murdered.' I was thunderstruck at the information, but there was no help for it; the money was gone.

"'I can't tell you any thing more, can I, sir?' said the carpenter.

"'No, thank you,' I answered, in a somewhat melancholy tone.

"The carpenter was preparing to leave the room, when the idea struck me that it would be a great satisfaction if Rover could be taught to detect any man that had murdered me (if that melancholy end should ever be my lot), and hand him over to the police. An act of retributive justice by the authorities for a crime of the kind would be cheap at a shilling. Even in a case of common assault, it might be useful if the magistrate would allow the dog's evidence to be taken. And even if a case of the kind had never yet occurred in an English court of law, it might open a precedent which afterwards might be acted upon in a manner most beneficial to the ends of justice.

"'Stop one moment,' I said to the carpenter. 'I should like to know in what way the dog of Montargis was taught to detect the murderer of his master, or was it simply the effect of instinct?'

"'Instinct, be hanged,' said the carpenter. 'It was training, nothing but training; and I'll engage to make that dog of yours as well up in the way of doing it in a week as the other, every bit as well.'

"Without a moment's further hesitation, I placed my other shilling in the carpenter's hand. He did not even condescend to thank me for it, but put it at once into his pocket.

"'Well, sir, it is done in this way, and no other. The villain has always a good large piece of dog's meat sewed up in the buzzim of his shirt, and so the dog always knows him in whatever part of the stage he may be, and pins him accordingly.'

"I stared at the man in utter astonishment. 'But do you mean to say he could not detect him without the dog's meat?'

"'Certainly not, sir,' said he. 'Dogs is like Christians; they must have something to know a villain by; they can't guess it no more than you. It would lead to all sorts of mischief if they could. No, sir; depend upon it, a poor, half-starved brute like your dog would be far more certain to detect your murderer by the dog's meat than by any other means; it's natural to him.'

"The carpenter then left me. I endeavored, but with scant success, to consider the increase of respect I had for Rover on finding his natural abilities not inferior to those of the dog of Montargis as an equivalent for the two shillings I had paid for my folly.

"It was my unlucky fate continually to meet with absurdities of the sort; and they had a most disagreeable effect on my mind and temper. Whenever I was thrown into a situation which called out my sympathies, I was certain to find in it some ridiculous element, which neutralized the serious and often salutary effects that

might otherwise have been produced. Even my first experience in the tender passion was so mixed up with it, that it deterred me from thinking of love for so long a time afterwards that celibacy became almost a habit in me.

"I was then a midshipman in the East India Company's service. At that time, John Company had his charter, and the service was considered better and more gentlemanly than it is at present. How this conclusion was arrived at I know not; certainly nothing could be more detestable than the life I led when I was in it. The position of its officers in society was certainly vastly inferior to that of the officers in His Majesty's service, although they were better paid. To affect as much as possible the bearing of the royal officers, they caricatured it. They established a sort of gradation or class on board their ships, which, on that of a high admiral, would have been considered simply ridiculous.

"As a proof of their importance, they had introduced into the service on board many of their ships a brutality and severity which would have been considered as infamous on board a ship of war.

"As a midshipman, I held a sort of neutral position; I was expected to keep myself far above the sailors; but, at the same time, it was a crime little less than mutiny to consider that I was either here or hereafter at less than an unapproachable distance from the sixth mate. It was while I held this unenviable appointment that I first fell in love. Among the passengers on board the ship were two companies, and several extra officers of His Majesty's 120th Regiment of Foot. We were conveying them to Bombay, where they were to be stationed. The wives and daughters of many of the officers were also cabin passengers. The young lady who particularly

attracted my attention was the daughter of Major C——, a kind-hearted, gentlemanly man, but whose position was of course so superior to that of the unfortunate East India Company's midshipman, that any thing in the shape of acquaintanceship or even of conversation was impossible.

"Maria, his daughter, was an exceedingly pretty girl about sixteen or seventeen years of age. She was evidently, from the expression of her countenance, for I never but once had the pleasure of speaking to her, exceedingly amiable. It was perfect happiness to me to see her on deck. I used to watch her each afternoon with her mother and sister when the band was playing; and I sincerely envied the military officers who fluttered around her. On these occasions my eyes used to be incessantly riveted on her; and I was often severely rated by my superior officers for my inattention to orders.

"At last, I felt certain that she noticed me, but most probably only from the fact of my incessantly gazing at her. She evidently mentioned my behavior to her sister, for she used to regard me with a peculiarly inquisitive, sarcastic manner. I hardly think she mentioned my behavior to her mother; at least, I never had any reason, from that lady's conduct, to imagine that she was even aware of my existence.

"My affection increased to such an extent that at last I grew desperate, and I determined, cost what it might, notwithstanding our fearful difference in position, to make known to her my passion; but how to manage it was the difficulty. To address her personally on the subject was of course impossible. Her mother was a cross-grained, ill-tempered woman, who, when not prostrated by sea-sickness, which, unfortunately, rarely occurred, had her eyes incessantly fixed on her daughters. I had too much dread of her to think of broaching the

subject to her, even if my position would not have made such an action presumptuous.

"There was only one member of her family with whom there existed the slightest possibility of forming an intimacy, and that was her young brother, a boy about eleven years of age. I immediately broke ground with him, and succeeded admirably. I commenced by giving him a pressing invitation to the midshipmen's berth. By degrees our acquaintance ripened into intimacy. Then, after binding him over to eternal secrecy, I confided to him my unhappy, consuming passion for his sister. Young as he was, and inexperienced in such matters, he kindly sympathized with me. He promised to assist me in every manner that lay in his power. I advised him to begin by pointing me out to his sister and telling her how vastly superior I was to the other midshipmen. Then to hint gently to her how incessantly I was talking and thinking of her. This I considered would be as much as would be prudent at the commencement.

"In a short time I found his sister had remarked me favorably, and thought me very good-looking. Here was encouragement for me. Of course, I sent word back that she was the loveliest girl I had ever seen. The next day she smiled kindly when she saw me. We were then within a fortnight's sail of Bombay. I used bitterly to weep in the night-watches when I thought that on her arrival there I should see her no more. Sometimes I thought of deserting the ship and enlisting as a private in her father's regiment, but then our difference in position would even be greater than ever.

"At last I summoned up sufficient courage to tell her brother how happy I would be if he could obtain from his sister some little object that I might keep as a me-

mento of her. He asked me what I should like, and I modestly left it to his discretion. He suggested a lock of hair, to which, as may easily be supposed, I gave a ready consent. I assured him that such a gift was more than my wildest imaginations could have hoped for; that the possession of such a treasure would make me happy for life.

"Bad weather set in, and I did not see either sister or brother again for some days. He was exceedingly delicate, and, during the rain, his mother confined him a prisoner to the cuddy. When I saw him again, he placed in my hand, without saying a word, a small folded paper, about the size of a shilling. As it evidently contained something, I immediately rushed below, and, with some difficulty, contrived to open it unseen by any one,—no easy task, as solitude is rare in a midshipman's berth. The paper contained a long but very thin tress of bright auburn hair. I knew it immediately by its beautiful color and silky texture to be his sister's.

"Never, I believe, was happiness equal to mine at that moment. I that day made, clumsily enough, out of one of my shirts, a small bag. How grateful was I, at the time, for the foresight of our old servant, who had placed a housewife of her own manufacture in my sea-chest, and thus, at that critical moment, to supply me with needle and thread. The bag, when finished, was just large enough to hold the hair in its paper envelope. Out of respect to my treasure, I had taken particular pains in making the bag, and was not a little proud of it when it was finished. When all was ready, I fastened it to a piece of spun-yarn, placing it round my neck, wore it next to my heart with all the respect due to a saintly relic.

"The ship arrived at Bombay. On the day of Maria's

leaving I determined to speak to her. It required no little courage, but true love will encounter any risk. An opportunity presented itself. She was standing near the gangway, a little behind her family, who were waiting for a boat to take them on shore.

"'Thanks, a thousand thanks,' I said, 'for your kind present. I wear it next my heart, and it shall never leave me.'

"The girl looked intensely astonished. 'I don't understand you,' she said aloud.

"Her mother, hearing her speak, looked round, and asked what she had said.

"'This gentleman,' said Maria, hesitatingly, 'made some remark, but I did not hear what he said.'

"'What is it you want, young man?' said her mother, haughtily. I was so taken aback that I could not answer a word, but sneaked sheepishly away. The mother mentioned the circumstance to her husband, who immediately reported my behavior to the officer of the watch. This brute, who, from his blackguardism, had been obliged to quit the navy, and had afterwards been received for his superior (by comparison) gentlemanly behavior into the East India Company's service, questioned me upon the subject, but I refused to answer him a word, and was in consequence sent to the mast-head as a punishment.

"The old cat of a mother suspected there was something concealed, and, of course, she determined to find it out. I was again questioned, but revealed nothing.

"Before the ship left Bombay, I was allowed one day's holiday on shore, and there, by chance, I met Maria's young brother. I requested him to tell me how the mistake occurred, and the cause of my making such a fool of myself. I found that it was true that it was his sis-

ter's hair I had been wearing, but she was not aware of its being in my possession.

"During the week he had been confined to the cabin by the wet weather, he had taken the opportunity of daily collecting from his sister's hair-brush the stray hairs, and with them had formed the tress he had given me. He had thought the possession of it was all that I wished for, and that how it was obtained was a matter of little importance.

"I left the sea-service, and was for some time without any regular employment. It was then I tried my hand as a press-writer. I at first sent in some short reports, which were accepted. By degrees my communications were better liked, and, at last, I received the appointment of a theatrical critic on a weekly paper, which had a very considerable circulation. It was not to be supposed that while thus employed my acquaintance with the ridiculous declined. There was, perhaps, no position into which I could have been thrown which would have given me greater opportunities of observing it. Of course, I had frequent opportunities of being behind the scenes, and the difference between the aspect of things before and behind the curtain is proverbial. Some of the occurrences I met with, in which the sublime and the ridiculous stood in close proximity, were extraordinary. One I remember perfectly:

"I had received permission, during the summer of the year 18—, to take a month's holiday from London, provided I would send in my average amount of copy weekly, it being left to my own judgment to choose my subject. I profited by the permission to take a flying trip to the north of Italy: this I did, not only for the pleasure and novelty of the journey, but also with the intention of improving my taste for music by visiting

the operas of Turin and Milan, the latter being considered then, as now, the best school for Italian vocal music in Europe.

"One night I was behind the scenes at the opera at Turin. The first act of the opera was over, and the ballet, which was then played between the first and second, was upon the point of commencing. The curtain rose, and a number of Coryphees rushed upon the stage to perform some opening dance in the ballet of 'Psyche.'

"I was standing by the wings at the time, watching a male dancer who was seated on a block of wood near me, waiting till it was his turn to go upon the stage. He was one of the principal dancers, and was to take the part of Zephyr. He wore a muslin tunic, which was fastened round his waist by a gold band; and from his shoulders projected a small pair of verdigris-colored gauze wings.

"He, at the moment, irrespective of his strange costume, presented a singular spectacle. On his knee, and with its head supported on his arm, was a sickly, emaciated infant of three or four months old. In his other hand he held a small gourd; fastened over its thin end was a piece of washed leather. The gourd was filled with some fluid, with which he was attempting to feed the infant, whose faint, sickly cry of annoyance, as it turned its head aside, seemed to cause him the greatest pain. He endeavored to soothe it with some endearing motherly expressions, but his attempts were vain. A tear gathered in the poor fellow's eye, and fell, leaving its trace in the stage-paint on his cheek.

"There was apparently full cause for his anxiety and sorrow. No human skill could have put three days' life into the child he regarded with so much affection. I think the same thought had also struck him, for, taking

the gourd from the infant's lips, he leant his brow upon his wrist, and, biting his lips, restrained with difficulty a flood of tears.

"Suddenly a change took place in the air the orchestra was playing, and the figurantees, having finished their dance, were hurriedly leaving the stage. The poor fellow, occupied with his own sad thoughts, paid no attention to them; but the air of Zephyr, the dance so well known in the old musical lesson-book, composed by Steibelt, commenced in the orchestra, and recalled him to his senses. He started hurriedly up, and looked wildly around him for a moment; then, placing the infant in the arms of one of the dancing-girls who stood near him, with a tremendous bound he leaped upon the stage. He was greeted with a loud burst of applause, for he was a general favorite. He could not stop in his movements to acknowledge the compliment, but he contented himself with attempting to place on his countenance a look of surprise and delight, which made his face, to those near him, almost ghastly. In his hurry to go on the stage, when he gave up the infant, he forgot to place the gourd also in the custody of some one, and, in consequence, he was obliged to hold it in his hand the whole time of his dance. It was curious to watch, in his different evolutions, the tact he used to hide the gourd from the audience, so that, in each turn he made, while throwing about his arms, the back of his hand should always be presented to them.

"But even this solicitude could not keep him from frequently casting his eyes towards the spot where his child was surrounded by the ballet-girls. Although he could not see it, its low, faint cry reached him, and it evidently went to his heart.

"As soon as the dance was over, he rushed from the

stage, regardless of the applause showered upon him, and, snatching the infant from those holding it, ran with it in his arms to his dressing-room. I asked my companion, the manager of a London theatre in search of a star, and through whose patronage I was then upon the stage, if he knew any thing of the poor fellow's story. He did not, but, upon inquiry of one of the ballet-girls, he received the following information:

"The dancer was a Frenchman, who had been engaged with his wife (also a professional) for some time at one of the smaller theatres in Milan. They were a very affectionate couple, and the happy parents of three children, the eldest about four years of age. The wife's engagement at Milan terminated a month before that of her husband. They had received the offer of an engagement in Bordeaux. The wife was required there immediately, but the husband's engagement commenced six weeks later. They did not like the idea of parting from each other even for so short a time, but they were very poor, and their engagement in Milan, from the failure of their manager, had been a most unprofitable one.

"The wife started off, taking with her hardly sufficient funds for her journey. The husband was to follow with the children as soon as his engagements were terminated, and he had received what little money might be saved from the amount the manager was owing them. Shortly after her departure the cholera broke out in Milan, and the theatre, after an unsuccessful attempt to keep it open, closed, and the poor fellow lost the whole of the money owing to him.

"This misfortune was the more terrible to him, as it rendered it exceedingly difficult for him to join his wife. Prudence in his profession is seldom carried to any great length; and he was by no means an exception to the

general rule. Thanks, however, to the assistance he received from some of his more fortunate light-heeled brethren, and the sale of some of his wardrobe, he at last had sufficient to commence his journey, when premonitory symptoms of cholera appeared in one of his children. Two days later, his eldest son was a corpse, and the second was afterwards attacked by the disease, which also terminated fatally.

"The poor fellow was now almost beside himself with sorrow, but his cup of misery was not yet full. He had received a letter from his wife, urging him to join her with as little delay as possible, not only on her account, but also as his engagement would be jeopardized should he be longer away. As he was penniless, he accepted an engagement for a week in Turin, by which he would be put in sufficient funds for his journey, but, on the moment of starting, another terrible anxiety presented itself. The infant, which had been rapidly weaned to allow its mother to proceed on her journey, now began to show symptoms of sinking. The constitution, never strong, could not bear the shock the absence of its mother and its natural food occasioned. Still he had no help for it. Turin was on his way, so taking his place in a vetturino, he started off, taking the child with him.

"In those days, a carriage of that kind took two days in performing the journey, and although the other passengers showed him every consideration, the infant suffered greatly from fatigue. On arriving at Turin, he obtained the opinion of the doctor of the theatre respecting the child's health, who, however, told him only a part of his truth. He said there was still a probability, though a remote one, of the child living; all depended on its being able to take nourishment. Somewhat consoled at hearing this, he attempted, by all means in his

power, to get the child to swallow food, but with poor success; and the evening that I saw him, he could not close his eyes to the fact that but small hope remained, and I afterwards learned, that before the next morning both hope and life had vanished.

"A second love-attack of mine was also terminated by a ridiculous circumstance, while I was in Italy. I was then in Milan. At that time, at the Carcano Theatre, they were performing Bellini's opera of 'I Capuletti ed i Montecchi,' with the exception of the third act, which was Vaccai's. It was played every evening during the fortnight I was in Milan, and every evening I heard it, in fact I did not lose one representation.

"It must not be imagined that love of music was my only attraction. I had fallen, at first sight, desperately in love with the prima donna, if the soprano of that opera bears the title, but which, I believe, really belongs to the contralto. Juliet was a lovely girl, with a clear, beautiful voice, which she managed most artistically. I was on the point of saying that Romeo's love for her was trifling when compared with mine, but that might be thought to relate to the contralto in the piece, and then the comparison would be an absurdity, for there the two lovers 'hated with a hate known only on the stage.' This feeling, however, was evidently occasioned by the animosity of Romeo, who, finding Juliet a far greater favorite with the public than herself, took every opportunity in her power of spiting her rival. This was apparent to all; in my eyes it made Juliet only the more interesting, and, I believe, did her no harm with the public at large.

"As I was invariably seated in the stage-box, which was on a level with the actors, after two or three representations Juliet began to notice me, and that occult

sympathy which certainly exists between lovers, passed between us. She knew I admired and loved her, and she evidently liked me in return.

"I wished to be introduced to my fair Juliet, and my wish was accomplished; but, alas! she only spoke Italian, and I knew but little of that language. Possibly Juliet might have overlooked the circumstance, or even have found my imperfect phraseology interesting, but with my keen sense of the ridiculous, the idea of making love in a language of which I only understood some score of sentences, seemed to me so absurd that I gave up the attempt, and contented myself with feasting my eyes on her from my box. Night after night found me still in the same place, and each night I admired her more than I did the evening before. She was tall, slim, pretty, and graceful, and her girlish figure contrasted most favorably with that of Romeo, who was evidently expecting soon to be a mother.

"Romeo evidently noticed my partiality for Juliet, and by way of annoying her, attempted first to attract my attention, but, finding that fail, she changed her tactics, and adopted a plan which could only have entered the imagination of a vindictive woman, and that woman an Italian actress.

"The evening she played off her detestable plot, she appeared to be in particularly good spirits; she sang with great care and animation. But I do not know how it was that in her grand air, each time she repeated the words, '*La tremenda ultrice spada*,' she gave a particularly significant look at me. All passed off well till the third act, both Romeo and Juliet being very much applauded. The scene opened in the mausoleum of the Capulets. Romeo came on the stage evidently in high spirits, totally contrary to what his feelings should have

been on the occasion. He wore his plumed hat even more rakishly than before, and his mustaches and imperial seemed to have acquired, between the acts, an additional coat of burnt-cork and grease.

"The tomb was broken open, and Juliet appeared stretched as a corpse on the grave-stone within it. Romeo then entered into the spirit of the scene, and after singing his adagio extremely well, he sucked the poison from the ring, and casting his hat upon the stage, he rushed towards the apparently inanimate Juliet. Then clasping her head on each side with his hands, he gave on her lips a long and passionate kiss. Juliet, awakened by his embrace, rose from her tombstone, and Romeo in terror sank upon his knees, as if he had seen her spirit; thus leaving Juliet in full view of the audience.

"No sooner did Juliet stand erect, than the treason of which she had been the victim became fully apparent. The audience burst into a loud laugh, and annoyed as I was, I could not refrain from joining in it. Poor Juliet, when she received Romeo's kiss, received at the same time an exact *fac simile* of his mustaches and imperial. No copying machine could have taken them off more perfectly. Her appearance was perfectly absurd. She was immediately aware of the fact, and of course was dreadfully annoyed. She turned mechanically towards me as if for consolation, and found me laughing too. The poor girl looked reproachfully at me for a moment, and then placing her hands upon her face burst into tears. The audience immediately applauded her greatly, and the performance abruptly terminated.

"I went home that night thoroughly annoyed and ashamed. My behavior appeared to me both unkind and ungentlemanly, and I determined the next night to

make amends for my unworthy conduct. I then applauded every thing she did, but it was useless; she did not honor me with a single glance. Three or four successive nights I was in my place, but Juliet was inexorable, and I left Milan without being forgiven. Other sins have since been graven on my memory, heavier than my conduct to poor Juliet, but of none have I been more ashamed or annoyed.

"Did I wish to educate any one as a cynic, I would certainly place him for some few years as reporter for the public press. The amount of knowledge of human life he would acquire would teach him the utter falseness of appearances in general, and in spite of himself he would become a cynic in the end; but when, as in my own case, nature smoothed the path for instruction, the result is not to be wondered at.

"When I first adopted literature as a profession, press-writing was a different affair from what it is in the present day. Gross personality then passed for wit, and vulgar abuse for sarcasm. At the same time this state of things was not without its excuse. The touch of the gentler good-humored sarcasm of the present day would not have been felt by the thick-skinned gentry for whose reformation it was especially intended. Among all classes it was the same. The last of the Georges was just on the throne, and the abuses in every state of society or public department, whether army, navy, pulpit, bar, or stage, were, according to our present views, perfectly astounding. With all the miserable stereotyped cant about the high independent feeling of the British nation, I believe it would have been the same in the present day, had it not been for the incessant Herculean labors of the public press.

"Do not imagine that their task was simply to point

out an abuse, and that the nation immediately eradicated it.

"It is curious, at the present day, to think of the enormous amount of labor the press had before them, and the admirable manner in which they accomplished a great portion of it. Day after day, week after week, year after year, did the press point out to the nation the horrible abuses they were subject to before the public would stir in the matter.

"The enormous injustice and avarice shown in ecclesiastical affairs, which were then common, seem now almost incredible. With one exception, the whole bench of bishops were advocates for negro slavery, and defended that 'peculiar institution' so warmly, that Lord Eldon argued that there was nothing contrary to the principles of Christianity in it, or the reverend lords would not have supported it in the manner they did.

"Two bishops were pointed out who had received their mitres from the English Pope, George the IV., while regent, through the direct patronage of court ladies of very indifferent reputation. Another, besides his bishopric, possessed eleven parochial livings.

"One archbishop had accumulated so great a fortune from his see, that he was enabled, on one New-Year's day, to present his grand-children, fifty-two in number, with one thousand pounds each, with little perceptible diminution to his fortune. Another bishop had given to different members of his family church livings to the amount of thirty-two thousand pounds a year, without exciting the slightest scandal in the mind of the pure head of the Church, that most religious and gracious king, George the Fourth.

"Another lived for years abroad, in the house of a woman of disgraceful reputation. All his revenues,

which were immense, he spent away from England, neglecting, with perfect impunity, the whole care of his diocese. It required no little courage, I assure you, on the part of the press, to attack the abuses in the Church alone. A sort of tacit understanding seemed to exist between it and the law to allow these infamies to be carried on with impunity. The law legalized every injustice, on condition that it had its share in the patronage; and the Church sanctioned and absolved every legal infamy that had for one of its objects the welfare of the Church; while the Crown stepped in and gave its sanction to both, forming a trinity of infamy which could not have been surpassed for barefaced injustice and wickedness in the worst era of the Roman Catholic Church.

"In the law, in the army and navy, and in every department, the same enormous abuses existed. Still the press went on, and, to a considerable extent, conquered, in spite of the continual threats on the part of the law, of severe punishment in this world; and on the part of the Church, of eternal perdition in the next. And yet all this time those at the head of these abuses called themselves the most virtuous and respectable portion of the nation, and the rest believed them, and almost idolized them for the lie they told.

"All this, or great part of it, has passed, but enough remains to prove that an immense amount of cant and humbug remains behind, enough to make one doubt the reality of any thing one sees. The longer I live, my dear fellow, the more fully I am convinced that the world is one monstrous sham. I have often stood and looked at the audience collected round Punch's Theatre, near St. Martin's Church, and envied the fellow who worked the puppets. It was an immense amusement to me to watch the crowd of

blockheads there assembled staring at what was insignificant, and thinking it attractive; listening to that which was utterly without wit or reason, and yet thinking it was entertaining; laughing immoderately at that which was without the slightest humor—not only doing all this at the fellow's bidding, but positively at last paying him for making fools of them. When I leave here, I hardly know how I shall employ myself; sometimes I think I will make that fellow an offer for his theatre and apparatus complete, and start with it afresh on my own account."

I inquired whether he considered himself sufficiently safe from a return of his unfortunate habit of laughing at serious subjects, and which principally necessitated his sojourn among us? He replied that, with one exception, he believed perfectly so. The point on which he had still his doubts was that of laughing in church. "On that subject alone," he said, "I am fearful. I once heard a clergyman deploring the total ignorance a preacher was kept in during his sermon, as to the effect it was producing on the minds of his congregation. 'An actor,' said he, 'receives applause or hisses, a member of parliament his cheers, his cries of 'Hear! hear!' or possibly disapprobation. The jester knows the effect of his jest by the laugh that follows it, but the preacher has before him uninterested, passionless countenances. To alter this, I admit, would be difficult. I have often wished that all my congregation had tails, and then, if they were pleased, they could wag them, without disturbing the silence of the place or the solemnity of the scene.'

"It would be difficult," continued Mr. Robinson, "to make you understand the effect the remark made on me. I was hardly ever in church, when, during sermon-time, it did not present itself to my mind. If a pet parson

entered the pulpit, I immediately saw all the feminine tails wagging. If he spoke of the duties of children to their parents, all the senile male tails wagged; if of the duties of servants to their superiors, all the matronly tails were in agitation. And after a long dull sermon, when all bent forward to offer up their last prayer, there appeared a simultaneous wagging of all the tails of the congregation. The return of this feeling I alone fear."

Whether the feeling ever did return, or whether he purchased Punch's Theatre, I am unable to say. He left us, or, in the words of John Bunyan, "he went on his way and I saw him no more."

CHAPTER XIII.

FAMILY AFFECTION.

ONE beautiful morning, as I was taking my accustomed walk in the grounds after breakfast, I observed the doctor leave the house somewhat smarter than usual, and with his walking-cane in his hand.

"What beautiful weather we have to-day, doctor!" I said, when he had reached me.

"Very," he replied; "and it is well for me it is so, for I have a very long walk before me."

"Where are you going to?" I inquired.

"As far as Combe, a little village about five miles from here; and I also purpose walking back again."

"I sincerely envy you," I said. "I should enjoy such a walk immensely."

"Should you? If so, I shall have much pleasure if you will accompany me. I am going on some business to the house of a gentleman, where I shall be occupied for perhaps half an hour; and I shall then return by the same path. If you are not frightened at the distance, it will give you an excellent appetite for dinner."

I accepted with great pleasure the doctor's offer, and he waited for me while I made the necessary preparation to accompany him. When I joined him, he told me he was obliged to go through the grounds of the other house. (I think I have already stated that the establishment for the incurable patients was adjacent to our own, being only separated from it by a high brick wall. The

communication between the two houses being through a door which was always kept locked, and of which the doctor and one or two others only had keys.)

As the doctor spoke he opened the door, and we entered. The grounds appeared even more extensive than those on our own side, but not so well kept. Near the house were several patients, with some assistants near them, but we saw but little of them, as the doctor took a side path, which led through a shrubbery, for the purpose of avoiding them. Presently we met a very singular-looking individual, evidently a patient; and near him, seated on a bench, was an assistant reading a book, which, however, did not prevent him from time to time raising his eyes to watch the movements of the patient. The poor maniac was dressed in a singular manner. He had on a loose pair of white trousers, and over them a wide, long robe or sheet, which came down below his knees. His head was uncovered. He was tall and apparently very thin, but he held himself very erect. He might have been between fifty and sixty years of age, but from the lines of settled care and sorrow on his face, it was impossible to make a near surmise how old he really was. The outline of his features was eminently handsome. He was ghastly pale. His eyes, which were deep sunk in his head, were without expression, although their lack-lustre appearance seemed rather feigned than real. His gaze was in a straight line before him, but evidently fixed on no settled object. His walk was remarkably slow, solemn, and stately. As we neared him, he took no notice of us whatever. When close to him, the doctor addressed him with—

"Good morning, Robson. How are you to-day?"

The patient did not take his eyes from their original gaze, nor give the slightest symptom that he saw us, beyond murmuring, in deep guttural accents,

"I am not of this world."

A little farther on we saw, drawn on the wall, in chalk or whitewash, the outline of a tombstone, on which was written, in Roman characters:—

"Sacred to the memory of Thomas Robson, M. D., who died April 13, 1852."

I looked at the doctor for an explanation, but he merely said in a low tone,—

"I will tell you his history when we are outside."

The singular appearance of the poor fellow interested me so much that I was impatient of the delay the conversation between the doctor and one of the chief assistants occasioned about some unimportant affairs of the establishment. As soon as he had finished, we left the grounds, and started on our walk across the common.

"You are somewhat surprised at the extraordinary dress and appearance of the poor fellow we met, are you not?" said the doctor.

"I certainly am," I replied.

"His history is a sad one, and, I assure you, he is very much to be pitied."

"Have you any chance of curing him?" I inquired.

"Not the slightest. It would be difficult indeed, with the settled conviction he has that he is a corpse."

"When he first came here, was he in a worse state than he is at present?"

"On the contrary," replied the doctor, "he was much better."

"Then a residence in an asylum of the kind may occasionally be detrimental to the disease itself?"

"Without stopping to answer that question, I may tell you, that the increase of his malady was not caused by any circumstance connected with this establishment. On the contrary, he improved rapidly for some time after his

arrival here, but a severe family misfortune caused a relapse."

I inquired, "What was originally the nature of his case?"

"Like many other cases, the original cause of his malady is exceedingly obscure. It developed itself, however, on two points. A most exalted idea of the beauty and utility of his own profession, and a naturally most devout mind. The extravagant indulgence in these feelings was the first traceable cause of his complaint."

"That religious feelings, when carried to excess," I replied, "might produce insanity, I can easily understand, but how scientific research can assist it is beyond my comprehension."

The doctor looked steadily and significantly at me.

"You would allude," I continued, "to my own case, but, believe me, you are all here laboring under a wrong impression. I maintain I am not insane. You are incapable of proving my theory of the accumulation of forces, '*ad infinitum*,' to be incorrect, and yet you consider me mad. I cannot blame you after all. Richelieu confined in a lunatic asylum a priest who attempted to construct a steam-engine, and was evidently actuated by a friendly feeling when he did so."

"I will not attempt to dispute your theory," said the doctor, "but I will confine myself to poor Robson's case. He is, as you doubtless perceived by the drawing he made of the tombstone, a physician, and he is a very learned one into the bargain. Yet, at last, he conceived the idea that he had received from Heaven the power of performing miracles. In the end, he carried it to such an extent, that he used to wander about the country, imitating the apostles, and attempting to heal the sick,

and making the lame to walk, by laying hands on them."

"That he could ever have been a clever man," I said, "seems to me impossible. Of all professions, that of medicine would have taught him that without Divine agency it would be impossible to perform miracles."

"But he held that men, that is to say, Christian men, had received from the Almighty that Divine power, and that all physicians, if they understood their profession rightly, could and ought to perform miracles in furtherance of the cause of Christianity."

"It would require some ingenuity to prove such a fact from the Bible."

"He did not consider it so. He held that our Saviour's life was to be taken by us as an example for us to imitate, and that He often gave proof of His Divine origin by the performance of healing miracles, and that Christians, who had that power, were bound to follow in the course the Saviour had marked out."

"By what arguments did he attempt to prove that man, in the present day, was empowered with the faculty of performing miracles?"

"He had many, and, occasionally, they were somewhat difficult to combat. He maintained that many common occurrences of the present day would have been as great miracles to the minds of those who were living thirty or forty years since, as any that were performed by the apostles. The last patient he treated lived in Paris, and his communication with him daily was through the electric telegraph, occupying, perhaps, an hour. Thirty years since, it would have cost him, at least, a week."

"But that was merely a simple effect of the advancement of natural philosophy, which all in the present

time can understand. Because we were in ignorance forty years since, is no proof that we have the power of working miracles now."

"Of that I am by no means persuaded. But he argued that our capability of understanding in what manner a miracle was performed, by no means divested it of its miraculous character. It was, in fact, a greater blessing accorded to the Christians of the present day than those of a remoter period possessed. 'Would,' he argued, 'the miracle performed by one of the apostles have been considered by him the less wonderful because he was partially aware of the manner the phenomenon had worked?'"

"Certainly not; but remember the apostles had neither to labor nor study to perform their miracles."

"That he admitted, as far as study, at any rate, was concerned, but, at the same time, he argued that both labor and study were necessities imposed upon man in his working of miracles from the disobedience of our first parents. But if we are obliged to submit to that law, our miracles, in return, are fully as wonderful, if not more so, than those performed by the apostles."

"How did he attempt to prove that?"

"From the extended power which, he maintained, we possessed. I remember one morning, a few months after his arrival here, when his mind had considerably increased in power, he was maintaining that human beings, under the blessings of Christianity, had the faculty of performing miracles, which I denied. He asked me my opinion of a miracle. I quoted to him, in reply, the text, 'Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?' He insisted that, by the science of medicine, which was eminently a Christian study, we had the power of doing it. 'Take,' he said,

'the children of the middle and higher classes of this country and compare them with the children of the working classes in Bethnal Green, and find the difference between them, and the cause. How much taller are the one class than the other.' I attempted to prove to him it was simply from the greater care and attention given to them in their childhood which made the one class superior to the other. He replied that the very knowledge of those requisites came from God, and the effect was miraculous, and proved by the text. He considered the great increase in the duration of human life was a still greater proof of the miraculous power in the hands of the present generation, and of this there is certainly no doubt. The extraordinary increase in the length of human life in the present day does certainly appear to have something miraculous in it. The age of man is no longer threescore and ten with those on whom the improved science of medicine has had its just power. I have heard that Dr. Farr, one of the most learned men of the day on the science of vital statistics, considers the ordinary life of man, under proper and judicious care, might be lengthened to a century. Certainly in the middle classes of society, a man who has led an abstemious life is now constitutionally younger at eighty than he was at seventy half a century since."

"But still all this is very different from a miracle."

"Understand me, my dear fellow, I am not maintaining his theory; I am merely giving the arguments of a maniac in a state of convalescence. But his doctrines went beyond that. He insisted that a miracle was greater or less in proportion with the state of uncivilization of the individuals witnessing it. That to the savage, a simple phenomenon which civilization saw without wonder and without gratitude, was to him a

miraculous proof of the power inherited by a Christian from his God. He gave as an example, the case of a friend of his who was surgeon of a trading ship on the coast of Africa. The wife of a negro potentate was suffering severely, and in great danger from a protracted and difficult labor. His majesty, who was greatly attached to her, fearing she would die, sought assistance from the captain of the ship, and the surgeon was sent on shore. He found, on introduction to his patient, that he had not arrived one moment too soon; and an operation was required. He placed his patient under the influence of chloroform, and some short time afterwards the child was born alive, and the doctor returned to his ship. The next day, a number of canoes were seen putting off from the shore, in the centre of which was one larger than the rest, containing his sable majesty, or whatever other title he bore. The smaller canoes were laden with fowls, fruits, and other eatables. When the chief, with some of his principal followers, were on board the ship, the object of his visit became apparent. They had come to make an offering of thanksgiving to poor Pilgarlick; and the surrounding smaller canoes contained it. They imagined him, from the nurse's as well as the patient's own description, as something more than mortal. He had taken a small phial from his pocket, and, pouring something from it which looked like water on a rag, he had given it to the suffering woman to smell. Immediately afterwards she fell into a deep sleep, and when she awoke her child was born, and that without further pain or difficulty. The effect appeared to them miraculous, and they wished to offer a proof of their gratitude and respect for the miracle. I have no doubt you will object to the surgeon's subsequent behavior. He did not deny the existence of a

miraculous agency. He stated, on the contrary, that the knowledge of, and the means of using such a wonderful power were placed in the hands of Christians by their God,—that they had, when they required it, the power of destroying pain so as to be able to perform the most terrible operations without awakening the patient whom they had thrown asleep—that his God was a God of mercy, and that His blessing was always on works of mercy.

"The savages seemed deeply impressed with the reasoning, or sophistry as you may call it, and left him with expressions of wonder and gratitude. He was sanguine enough to think that Christianity might easily have been planted among them if its advent was accompanied by deeds of mercy. His hopes, however, soon vanished. He found by the newspapers, some months after his return to England, that King Bill had in some way insulted the British flag, and had also refused to apologize for the wickedness he had committed. Whereupon, the admiral in command of the station had very properly sent a flotilla of gun-boats, and killed two thousand of King Bill's subjects, as well as burnt forty villages. His sable majesty, convinced by this powerful reasoning of the folly of his conduct, came to his senses, and apologized to the admiral in a proper and becoming manner, at the same time promising to contribute two hundred bushels of ground-nuts, whatever they may be, towards the heavy expenses incurred by the British Government in chastising him."

"I will not say," I remarked, "that the surgeon was altogether wrong, but, at the same time, I look with great suspicion on his reasoning. The application of a simple medical remedy, whose action is easy to describe, ought with great caution to be admitted as any thing miraculous."

"But poor Robson did not place all his ideas of modern miracles on simple physical phenomena, which are easy of comprehension. He was also a firm believer in mesmerism."

"He must then have been mad, indeed," I quickly remarked.

"But there was method in his madness," said the doctor, "for all that. Understand me, when I say he was a firm believer in mesmerism. Do not imagine he placed the slightest faith in reversed vision, table-turning, spirit-rapping, or any absurd tomfoolery of the kind. His belief centred in the idea that an occult sympathy frequently existed between human beings which science certainly as yet has been unable to account for, at least in a satisfactory manner. You may laugh if you please, but I mean what I say."

"Do you really consider there is any truth in it?"

"I hardly understand your question. If you mean, do I believe that a power, difficult to describe, exists, by which a person may possess a sympathetic sort of control over another, I unhesitatingly admit that I do, although I do not carry my faith as far as did poor Robson. I have myself seen in the hospital at Calcutta a mesmerist surgeon amputate the thigh of a Hindoo at the hip joint, the poor man being the whole of the time in a sound mesmeric sleep, in which he had been placed by a person *en rapport* with him, as I believe the professional slang terms it. It was feared that, from extreme loss of blood, the Hindoo would die under the operation, when the mesmerist awoke him, and, after giving him a strong dose of brandy to keep up the circulation, he sent him to sleep again, and the operation was successfully terminated."

"You saw that?"

"I saw it myself. But poor Robson's belief went far beyond mine; he carried it, in fact, far within the confines of insanity. He concluded from the text, 'For I feel that virtue hath gone out of me,' that every Christian believer was, to a more limited extent, endowed with the same power; and his malady increased, till he was found, as I said before, wandering about the fields, laying his hands on the poor, and imagining thereby he could heal them. This was the most difficult phase in his complaint, and that on which his relapse supervened. Now, poor fellow, his disease is incurable."

"Can you at all trace the cause of his relapse?"

"Easily. There was nothing obscure in that. But I cannot make you understand it clearly without giving you a short sketch of his history.

"I knew little of poor Robson till I came here, except by his reputation, and that was of the most honorable description. He was humane, indefatigable, learned, and just. In every respect, I believe it would have been impossible to have found a worthier member of our profession. Of course, when he came under my hands as a patient, it was my duty to discover, as far as I possibly could, his antecedents. It appears that, like many other physicians, the first years of his life had been years of toil, fatigue, and anxiety, and occasionally of privation as well. When about thirty years of age he married, and his worldly prospects about that time underwent a great change for the better. His wife was pretty, amiable, and of considerable wealth; but, to a man of Robson's affectionate temperament, she brought with her what was a source of great anxiety. She was the only remaining scion of a large family, all of whom had died of consumption. Although the disease seemed to have been arrested in her, thanks to a somewhat lengthened

residence in her youth in a warm climate, there were sufficient vestiges of it remaining to show Robson it was not altogether extinct.

"Robson's success in his profession kept pace with his means, and he was for some years, with the exception I have mentioned, as happy as a man could be. His wife had only borne him one child, a daughter, who promised to be as pretty as her mother. A lengthened career of happiness was not, however, to be his lot; and five years after his marriage, his wife began to show symptoms of her terrible hereditary disease, and in a short time afterwards poor Robson was a widower.

"Her death appears to have preyed fearfully on his mind. Resignation came to his relief at last, partially by the effects of time, infinitely more so by religion. He never married again. A portion of his time he dedicated to the practice of his profession, in the gratuitous exercise of which he considered a great amount of religion entered, and in it, if in no other case, the truth of the assertion, *Laborare est orare*, could be proved. All the remainder of his time was employed in watching the education and health of his daughter, Maria, who increased daily in beauty and talent, and in favor with God and man. One great source of consolation he found in her was, that he believed the hereditary malady was extinct. From what I have since heard, his wish was father to the thought, more than his maturer judgment.

"His daughter married early, and to a man in every way fitted to be the husband of an amiable, lovely, and talented girl. Robson was again supremely happy, but his happiness again was doomed to be but of short duration. His daughter promised to become a mother, and both Robson and her husband naturally waited for the event with considerable anxiety. The time arrived, and all at

first promised to end satisfactorily, but puerperal fever set in, and the poor mother sank under it; the child, a daughter, survived.

"Robson's grief at the death of his child was so great, that it prevented him for some time from following his profession. He, naturally religious, now carried that feeling to the verge of insanity, and this is the first trace I can find of his malady. By degrees, however, he resumed the practice of his profession, but he mixed up with it so much of a morbid, theological sophistry, that all his acquaintances could perceive the insanity which afterwards developed itself. Gradually it increased, till at last he considered he had acquired the power of working miracles; and from his wild behavior, in wandering about the country without money and without shelter, it was considered absolutely necessary to put him under restraint."

"But how did he come to imagine himself a corpse?"

"Give me time, and I will tell you. He improved rapidly for some time after his arrival here, till his malady at last reduced itself into the idea that Christianity had given to man, through science, the power of performing miracles, and that that power was principally lodged in our hands for the greater furtherance of the cause of Christianity; and in this idea, let me tell you, that I, as free from a taint of insanity as it is possible for a man to be, or I should not be placed in the situation I am, partially agree with him."

It was with difficulty, when I heard the poor fellow boast of his freedom from insanity, and thought of his mania for organ-building, that I could restrain a smile.

"As his disease diminished," continued the doctor, "his mind dwelt more upon his grandchild, who was now between nine and ten years of age. She had been placed under the care of an elderly lady, a relative of his late

wife's, who treated the child with every care and attention. But poor Robson seemed doomed to misfortune. His grand-daughter was in the habit of coming here once in every three months, accompanied by her guardian, to see him. On entering her eleventh year, she began to show symptoms of a strong predisposition to consumption. Robson, at first, refused to believe the evidence of his senses; but on one of her visits the symptoms were so fully developed, that it was impossible for him longer to shut his eyes to the fact. So profound was his sorrow at the discovery, that we were obliged to devise some means of averting a return of his malady. At last, it was decided that the girl and her guardian should take lodgings in a respectable farm-house, near the asylum, and that Robson, whose experience in consumptive cases was equal to any man's in England, and whose insanity had now sufficiently diminished to allow him, from time to time, to leave the house unattended, should take charge of her case in conjunction with a medical man of some eminence and greater experience in the neighborhood.

"All Robson's intense family affection was now centred in that child, and as the disease progressed his love for her seemed to increase in proportion. All science in the case was now evidently hopeless; but so great was his terror at the imminent disaster which was soon to overwhelm him, that he refused to believe in its possibility, and he sought for assurance of his security in his own unfortunate malady.

"At first when he found his medicinal appliances useless, he naturally applied to his Maker for help and consolation; and never did petitions ascend to the throne of mercy more energetically from one individual than from poor Robson. Night after night, and the whole night long, could his voice be heard in prayer for her

recovery, and the day he spent by her bedside. It was painful to witness him when in her presence. He would sit by her side and watch her with an intensity, showing the greatest anxiety, while each time she looked at him, his face would wear a smile, so artificial, it rather heightened than concealed the feeling he wished to hide from her.

"The disease still increased, and Robson, when absent from her room, became almost frantic. Louder and louder each night became his prayers, and more incoherent his supplications. At last he imagined that his prayers had been heard, and that he had received from Heaven the power claimed by mesmerists, of increasing the vital stamina of the patient by decreasing their own. He, of course, was not without a certain amount of reason in support of his theory. Over and over again it has been found, in mesmeric cures, that as the sick person increases in health that of the mesmerist decreases. Day after day would Robson sit by the child's bedside, and with his hand placed on hers, imagine that health was being poured into her at an equal loss to his own. In the evening he would appeal to me whether I thought he did not look more unwell than he did when he left home in the morning, little imagining that I could fully understand his meaning. Misfortune always comes too soon. I considered the longer I could keep up his delusion the longer I could put off the evil day, so I always told him that he appeared to me to fall off in health hourly. I now hardly know whether I was justified in the course I took, but, at any rate, I intended it for the best.

"The child got worse, and death was almost daily expected; good nursing and scientific treatment alone keeping her alive. Robson watched her incessantly, and

clung to each momentary change for the better, so common in consumptive cases, as a proof that his system was benefiting her. As she sank, he proved false even to his own theory, for I detected him in almost starving himself that when he looked in the mirror, his countenance might appear the more pallid, to extract from it the hope that his grandchild's health was the better.

"The child died. Her death took place almost suddenly in the night, and when Robson was absent, as I dared not allow him to sleep out of the asylum. I cannot exactly find out how he first heard of it, most likely from hearing some of the assistants speak of her death when passing his bed-room door. In fact he could not possibly have known it by any other means. The morning after her death I was sent for to see him. He was then almost in a state of coma. He appeared utterly bewildered as if something *impossible* had occurred, and yet he was certain of the fact. He remained speechless in his room for more than a week, the servants mechanically feeding him. At last he appeared to conceive the idea that he himself had expired. That he was ignorant of what was passing upon earth, and thereby concealing from himself the fact of his grandchild's death. He is now, poor fellow, quite incurable; nothing can eradicate the mischief. How long he will remain in the melancholy condition it is impossible to say; certain it is, it will only cease with his death. His bodily health is good, and he may yet live for many years. But certainly, of all distressing cases I have had under my control, his is the most so; nor can I imagine one more terrible."

CHAPTER XIV.

A FITTING PUNISHMENT.

For most of my companions in misfortune I felt great sympathy, but there was one, a Mr. Brown, who inspired me with feelings of the strangest aversion. Not from any thing he did personally to offend me; on the contrary, he appeared always anxious to obtain my good opinion, and was on all occasions most courteous to me, but there was in the man something so repulsive to my ideas of a gentleman, that I could hardly control, in his presence, my feeling of dislike. His manners were a caricature of a man of fashion. In dress he was particularly neat, and, wonderful to say, always in good taste; but there was, after all, a certain appearance of studied effect about him, which gave him rather the aspect of an animated tailor's manikin than of any thing else. At first sight there was no appearance of insanity about him, especially when he was seated; and when walking or standing, nothing more abnormal could be discovered than a frequent jerking of one or other of his feet, as if to disembarrass himself of something which occasionally clung to them. I had noticed it for some time without my curiosity being sufficiently excited to ask any questions on the subject. One morning, however, when he had joined me in my walk, the movement, which I can only compare to the reverse of the spasmodic action, known as the string halt in the horse, was particularly remarkable. At last, after a violent jerk which nearly overthrew his equilibrium, I inquired what was the matter with him?

"Those d——d women are at it again, sir," he said; "they get worse and worse."

I pressed for an explanation, and he told me in a tone of voice evidently intended to excite my pity, that his life was rendered miserable by the extraordinary favor he was held in by all women, and that they, by some miraculous power he was unable to account for, got under the flooring of rooms, and in the ground, and were incessantly pulling him by the leg to obtain his attention.

I was, I must confess, completely puzzled at the man's infatuation. Although a "*petite maitre*" in the highest degree, and as such likely to be a favorite with an unintellectual class of women, there was a certain fatuity, a sort of self-sufficiency, about him, combined with an unmistakable impertinence of manner, added to a most ignoble countenance, which would, as far as my humble experience went, have made him rather disliked and avoided than otherwise by the sex he imagined so much attached to him.

My curiosity being now sufficiently aroused, I applied to the doctor for a description of the case, which he willingly gave me.

"I sympathize, I believe, as much as any man can do with my patients," he began, "but for that fellow I have not the slightest pity. On the contrary, I consider that a more fitting punishment on the contemptible little scoundrel than the malady he is laboring under could not have been imagined. His history is shortly this:

"His father was a miserly west-end tailor, and my patient was his only son. They lived together on a ground floor in a back street, and the old man, after having been many years foreman in a first-rate firm, contrived to get together a respectable and somewhat numerous class of customers. His business being good, his profits consid-

erable, and his expenses of the smallest, he managed to accumulate property rapidly. He kept no domestic servant, the service of their small establishment being performed by his wife, who was as mean and sordid as her husband himself.

"It might easily be imagined that the only son of such a couple would have run a good chance of being spoiled by over-indulgence; such, however, was far from being the case. From his few workmen, the old man, in general, exacted every stitch of labor that the custom of the trade would allow him to take, but to his son, had he been his slave, he could not, during his boyhood, have been more tyrannical.

"The boy grew up, and his father, having bound him apprentice to himself, continued to exact from him incessant labor, without other remuneration than in finding him in board and lodging. This continued till the lad was eighteen years of age, when, from his expertness with the needle, the father finding his services too valuable to lose, consented to allow him a few shillings a week pocket-money. This, and more frequent indulgence in the shape of holidays, brought on a better feeling between father and son; in fact, in many things their tastes so perfectly agreed, that a good intelligence between them was easily brought about.

"Infirmity came upon the mother, which rendered her incapable of performing her household duties. This at first was a source of grief to the old man, as it necessitated the hire of some one to perform the household work, and thereby to increase his expenses (the medical treatment of his wife he took upon himself); but, fortunately, it happened that a widowed sister of his wife had died some few months before, leaving an only daughter an orphan, who was now fully old enough to obtain her

own living. The old man proposed that it should be offered to the girl to do the work of the house in return for her board and lodging. This, he said, would be an advantageous arrangement for her, as the little money her mother had left her, about two hundred pounds, was, of course, not sufficient to maintain her, but the interest of it was ample to supply her with clothes. The arrangement, also, would be beneficial to himself, as he could avoid paying wages to a servant, and thus render less painful to him the infliction of his wife's illness.

"The girl willingly accepted the offer, and was the next day installed in her new position in the family as half-servant, half-relation. She was a quiet, amiable, industrious creature, about a year older than young Brown. In appearance, she was singularly unattractive, having not only ugly features, but a bad complexion as well. Her mouth was the only redeeming feature in her face. It was tolerably well formed, and when open, exhibited a beautiful set of teeth. Being most willing to oblige, and capable of a considerable amount of hard work, it need scarcely be said she was soon as great a favorite with her aunt and uncle as it was possible for any one to be.

"The old couple kept no society, and the only female acquaintance with whom young Brown was on any terms of intimacy was his cousin; and, ugly as she was, a sort of attachment sprang up between them, slight enough, perhaps, on his part, but warm and sincere on the part of the girl.

"When the young man was about nineteen years of age, his mother died. On the occasion he showed considerable consistency of character. As during her lifetime he had never shown her the slightest affection, so, at her death, he did not betray the slightest sorrow. It is more than probable he would hardly have taken the

trouble to follow her to the grave had he not successfully made it the means of getting a new suit of mourning from his father.

"With the father it was different. At his time of life the loss of the companion of many years, especially one whose natural tastes assimilated so closely with his own, could not occur without its being keenly felt. But the old man was to a certain extent a philosopher, and he brought reason to his aid, and not in vain. He calculated the loss his feelings had sustained by her death, he estimated the amount of fruitless money she had latterly cost him, and that that loss would no longer occur; he weighed one item against the other, drew a conclusion, and found a moderate balance in favor of his love for his wife, and this he honestly cancelled by ordering a funeral, modest enough in itself, but liberal in his opinion, and then erecting a respectable-looking tombstone to her memory in the grave-yard in which she was buried.

"The next few months passed over without much worthy of notice. The old man began to get bodily infirm; but in proportion, his mind appeared to get shrewder, and his temper certainly more avaricious. He began also to be jealous of his son's interference in the business. Still he could not do without him, so he left the mechanical part of it in his hands, while he took upon himself the whole control of the books. These were to the son hermetically sealed. At the same time he was fully aware that his father had accumulated a considerable sum of money, but how much he could form no idea. The old man suspected his son's thoughts, and endeavored to neutralize them by occasionally deploring the heavy losses he had from time to time sustained, without ever specifying the amount or the names of the defaulters, and at other times, by expressing his

determination to leave every thing he possessed to a hospital, that being, in his opinion, the most useful of all charitable institutions.

"If his son had little faith in the first of these statements of his father, he had immense respect for the second. He knew the old man to be of a most determined and revengeful character, and, he was equally certain, of a most suspicious disposition. He therefore resolved to do nothing to elicit the latter vice in his father, but to submit without opposition to his meanness and tyranny. In the mean time, the attachment between him and his cousin continued unabated, both taking good care to conceal it from the father, nothing certain in what way the irascible old man would take the intelligence of their loves.

"About a year after the death of the mother the son was thrown on a bed of sickness from an attack of the small-pox. The disease showed itself in a somewhat severe form, and for some time it threatened to be seriously so. The old man, to do him justice, showed, for him, considerable concern on the occasion, which developed itself by his calling in a physician of eminence to attend his son, and never on any one occasion of his visits grumbling at the payment of the fee. The affection the cousin bore to the sufferer developed itself in a different manner. The poor girl not only felt deeply for his affliction, but did all in her power to alleviate it. Never did a conscientious nurse do her duty more nobly. Day and night, whenever her household duties would allow her, was she beside the sick-bed. Fatigue seemed to have lost its power over her, and sleep seemed too selfish a luxury for her to indulge in. As the disease increased in intensity, her sorrow grew greater in proportion, and her labor more incessant; and when health

promised to return, the joy she experienced more than paid her for the terrors and fatigues she had undergone.

"Health at last did return to the sick man, but sickness attacked the healthy girl. The same disease, but in a far more severe form, seized her, to the consternation of both father and son. They deliberated on the best means of assisting her; resolved—and sent her to the hospital.

"It must not be imagined that while the poor girl lingered on, that the father and son were indifferent to her fate. The son sincerely regretted her absence, for his comforts, which were one of her greatest pleasures to attend to, were now comparatively neglected. The father felt her absence still more severely, for the charwoman's presence, who was engaged to perform the girl's duties, continually reminded him that she had to be paid, and he bitterly lamented the misfortune which had befallen his niece. Incessant were the inquiries they made respecting her at the hospital, and sincere were their hopes for her speedy recovery.

"In the mean time the disease ran on with great severity. For some days her life was despaired of, but, thanks to a good constitution, she ultimately recovered. The first time she glanced at her face in a mirror, after the disease had left her, was for her a moment of cruel mortification. Her face, always far from handsome, was now fearfully scarred. Female vanity, that most readily-credited sophist, could not conceal the truth from her. She was hideous, and she knew it. A violent flood of tears was the result of her conviction, and they flowed abundantly. When she became calmer, she began to calculate the effect her appearance would have on her lover. Womanlike, if she found she could not conquer with one weapon, she did not despair, but chose

another. She resolved that, by ready attention to his wants, by perfect obedience to his every wish, she would, if not captivate him, at least make him feel kindly towards her, and she would endeavor to shut her eyes to the rest; perhaps after all love might come later.

"At last she left the hospital and returned home. Both her uncle and cousin seemed pleased to see her, and expressed their feeling in words—the son perhaps somewhat indefinitely, the father more precisely, for he gave the equivalent of his sorrow for her misfortune by naming the sum he had to pay the charwoman—his joy at her return that that expense would no longer continue. To her great satisfaction neither father nor son made one observation on her altered appearance. She commenced on her duties immediately, and things again went on in their ordinary routine.

"Another year passed over their heads. The old man had been seized with a paralytic stroke, from which he only partially recovered. Still he would not give up the control of the business. His infirmities, however, confined him to his room the greater part of the day; nevertheless, from twelve till four daily, he was seated regularly inside the door of his shop, to speak to customers as they entered, and to keep an eye as well on the general management. After that hour he invariably retired to a room which had been taken for him on the first floor. By six o'clock he was in bed, and nothing more was seen of him till the next day.

"The attachment between the cousins continued, though perhaps somewhat still less ardent on the part of the cavalier; on hers was observable the same patient anxiety to retain, at any rate, whatever portion of his affections he might offer in return for the sincere love she bore him. But a circumstance occurred which con-

siderably heightened the young man's love for his cousin. She came of age, and the two hundred pounds which she had inherited from her mother were paid over to her. It was singular how much it caused her attractions to increase in his eyes, or rather how blind he became to her personal defects. He was naturally ostentatious and fond of display in dress, but from the miserable stipend paid him by his father, he had little opportunity of indulging his tastes. Now it was different. His cousin, had he required it, would willingly have given him all, even to the last shilling; but the possibility of love so disinterested never entered his imagination. He first requested the loan of a few pounds to purchase a suit of new clothes. His application was immediately granted. Never in her eyes was money better invested than when she saw him in them. She eyed him with the satisfaction of a sculptor examining, when terminated, the favorite work of his chisel. He was certainly well dressed and in excellent taste. Having opportunities of frequently seeing men of fashion, and knowing more than one foreman of first-rate houses who would cut him out, what he called, a tip-top suit of clothes, he contrived to have the appearance of a gentleman, at least when the expression of his countenance was not too severely criticised.

"The success of his clothes developed other expensive tastes, of which the theatre was one. From the theatre he rose to the opera. From the opera he advanced to the race-course, and from the race-course to the gambling-room. In the last, he one night lost nearly a hundred pounds. Let justice be done him, he was more than three parts intoxicated at the time, or, without objecting to the vice, he would never have been guilty of the folly.

"Immediately after his loss he gave his note of hand,

payable at sight, for the amount. He attempted to get off the payment when the bill was presented, on the plea of his minority, but the holders threatened to bring the affair under the notice of his father, and the old man's anger he had not the courage to meet. In his trouble he again applied to his cousin, and again his request was immediately granted, though, at the same time, she begged of him never again to gamble. He willingly made her the promise she required, and he faithfully kept his word.

"Profuse indeed were his expressions of gratitude, and equally solemn were his promises of repayment when his father should die and leave him the business. For the moment she was somewhat puzzled. 'But then, dear,' she said, 'will not all be equally our own when we are married?' He hesitated, but in a moment recovered himself. 'Certainly,' he said, 'but this money I shall never consider as mine. It shall be yours to do what you like with it.'

"She had still nearly seventy pounds left, and this she invested on her lover. She received, as interest on her capital, the recital of the good company he now kept, the manners of the people of fashion with whom, he said, he associated; but to whom he was, in reality, unknown, even by sight or name; their dress and amusements, and, in fact, the routine of small talk of the kind which creates so much interest in the mind of an ignorant girl.

"At last her liberality to her lover left her penniless; but about the same time the old man died. He was, one morning found lifeless in his bed. The behavior of the son, when he realized the event, was perfectly in keeping with his character. Not a tear did he shed; not an expression of regret escaped him. Nothing could be

more business-like than the behavior he exhibited on the occasion. After making a shrewd bargain with the undertaker for his father's funeral, he placed the dead body in his care, with as little feeling as he would have shown in consigning a bale of goods to a carrier. He then called on his father's lawyer, a money-lending attorney of second-rate respectability. The reception he met with from this gentleman was the first gratifying result of his altered position. Nothing could be more respectful or obsequious than the behavior he received. The parvenu, to the lawyer's satisfaction, accepted the cringing courtesy offered to him as his due, and gave himself considerable airs of importance on the occasion. He inquired in an off-hand way for his father's will. The solicitor replied that he certainly had made a will for his deceased client some years back, and, if it were still in existence, it was his duty to congratulate his young friend on the inheritance he had come into; still, with the greatest respect to the memory of the deceased, his late client was somewhat of a reserved disposition, and had possibly made another since. It was true he had been for many years the confidential adviser of the deceased in all his investments, and he should be very happy to give all the information in his power at any or at all times when he could be made useful. The wary practitioner then mystified his new client about the old man's affairs to an extent that showed his assistance would be necessary in winding up the deceased's estate, and after making an offer of a loan of money (which was immediately accepted), should the heir be in want of ready cash, the young fellow left, promising to consult the solicitor on every step he should take.

"Although the sum he was likely to receive was still an unknown quantity, the metamorphosis it effected in

the manner and appearance of the young man was most remarkable. Had he been accustomed to a fortune all his life, instead of the miserable pay of a journeyman tailor, he could not have held labor and its sons in a greater contempt. The few acquaintances he had, when they called to congratulate him on his acquisition, were received with a tone and manner which showed that all connection would soon end between them. To his cousin his behavior also was altered. There was now no attempt at affectionate display. Not a spark of feeling or friendship did he show for her, but he treated her as he would a domestic who had just entered on the service of his house, civilly, coldly, and shortly. At first, the poor girl was both surprised and hurt at his conduct, but Love is rich in excuses, and he soon found one for her. He showed her that the young man had lately thrown upon his hands a great amount of responsibility, and that his mind was too much occupied with that, added to his father's loss, to allow him to show her the affection he was wont. Flimsy as the reasoning was, it was to her a perfect consolation, and she sought for no other.

"The preparations for the funeral were now completed, and modest enough in all conscience they were. The son appeared to consider in one way alone need the outside semblance of respect to his father's memory be shown, and that was in his own dress, in which he had been most lavish. He however economized the expenditure, by the utter meanness of the mourning he provided for his cousin, which was of the cheapest and coarsest description. When the girl found the quality of the dress her cousin had procured for her, perhaps for the first time in her life she felt really angry with him. Her womanly feeling was offended at the appearance she made, and it is more than probable she would have ex-

postulated with him on the subject, had not her attention been diverted to a considerable extent by the funeral ceremony. The son and the solicitor were the only mourners, and neither pretended the slightest sorrow or feeling on the occasion. The same coldness seemed to have seized the clergyman who (really) performed the ceremony. It was hurried over without attention or respect, and the two mourners returned to the house. The will was then produced and read by the solicitor, who had contrived to find it. It was short and explicit. The testator left every thing to his son, with the exception of an annuity to the mother, but as she was now dead, the young fellow inherited the whole. Nothing was left to the girl, or in fact any other individual.

"A long conversation then took place between the heir and the solicitor as to the securities his father had invested his savings in. To his great satisfaction he found they were principally loans on mortgage, or bills on interest, with good collateral security; his father having done a considerable business as a money-lender at large rates of interest. On inquiring the names of his father's debtors, young Brown found there were among them several scions of good families, but of indifferent personal reputation, and he determined in his own mind to make these his stepping-stones to get into far higher society than he had been accustomed to mix in. On inquiry, what would probably be the gross value of his father's property, he heard, to his intense joy, it could not certainly be less than twenty thousand pounds, so rapidly had the petty sordid gains of the old tailor accumulated at compound interest under his thrifty management.

"The very day after the funeral, young Brown left the house he had hitherto been accustomed to reside in, and took up his quarters in a fashionable hotel. His

first idea was to get rid of his cousin, and for this purpose he consulted his friend the solicitor on the subject, as although unscrupulous enough generally, he had an aversion to take the task upon himself.

"His supple legal friend listened with great attention to the recital. He afterwards expressed his surprise that she had received no wages, but his client informed him that her position in the establishment arose from a charitable feeling on the part of his father and mother, and that she would have been utterly helpless and destitute without their support. He dwelt also at considerable length on the kindness they showed her during the attack of small-pox, and their goodness in receiving her back again after the loathsome disease had terminated. The solicitor advised that the better way would be to give her a small sum of money, say five pounds, and send her about her business. This was agreed to readily by Brown, who also wrote a note to her, informing her the solicitor was acting under his instructions, and concluded by hoping that she would soon succeed in obtaining another situation.

"Before starting on his mission, the solicitor intuitively perceived that his client had something more to communicate than he had yet stated, but that there was some difficulty, or delicacy, in broaching the subject, so he determined to commence it himself, and asked whether there was any other circumstance she would be likely to speak of? After a little hesitation, Brown admitted that there was, and brought forward, sheepishly enough, the affair of the two hundred pounds. The solicitor listened with intense surprise, for he had expected a totally different subject might have been spoken of; but his surprise was still further increased when he heard his client observe, that as he was not yet of age when the loan was contracted, he was not legally liable

for the repayment, especially as the money was not advanced for necessaries.

"For some moments the solicitor stood utterly aghast. He had often in the course of his professional career met with thoroughly heartless scoundrels, and he might, had not modesty prevented him, have enrolled himself among the number; but one more despicable than his interesting client he had never seen. At last, however, he broke silence. He admitted that his client was right in point of law; but that, all things considered, he thought it would be better that he should say nothing about the affair, and that, if she mentioned it, he had better plead ignorance of the transaction. The fact was, that although his conscience generally troubled him but little, he was still a man, and as such his feelings naturally revolted at a commission of the kind. At the same time, he proposed that Brown should go out of town for a week or ten days to let the affair blow over, should the girl ride rusty (as he called it) on the occasion. This was finally agreed on. The next morning Brown went to Brighton, and the solicitor proceeded on his errand.

"When the solicitor arrived at the house of business, it was with some trepidation that he stated the object of his visit. He found the girl calm and collected, but she had evidently been crying. The fact was, that, with all her willingness to deceive herself, she could not shut her eyes to the truth that her lover no longer cared about her; but she had little idea on how contemptible a being she had placed her affections. She received the solicitor's communication quietly; she made no remark on the contents of the letter; indeed, had it not been for the rigid manner she compressed her under lip against her teeth, it might have been thought she was merely receiving warning in the regular way.

"The solicitor proceeded to spread upon the table the five sovereigns, and then the 'woman' broke out. She pushed them indignantly back with her hand, and then burst into a violent flood of tears. The solicitor attempted, with something very like feeling in his tone, to calm her, but without success. Calculating, and correctly, that the refusal of the money would be but temporary, he informed her that she must quit that day, as the house would be closed on the morrow, and then taking advantage of a fresh burst of sorrow he left her, thankful that his errand was over, and that nothing had been said about the two hundred pounds, but more disgusted with his client than ever.

"At the end of a week Mr. Brown returned to London, and commenced living, according to his own views on the subject, the life of a man of fashion. At first he became the object of attack of all those harpies who prey upon the wealthy, ignorant, and unwary in the metropolis; but he escaped from the whole of them perfectly unscathed. True, he had inherited a considerable sum of money from his father, but with it as well, all the old man's shrewdness and selfishness. He never by any chance paid more than the exact mercantile value for any thing he purchased, and with all his airs of extravagance, he was as keen after a good bargain in the bill-line as his father himself could have been. A broken-down fashionable "leg" introduced him into a certain class of female society, hoping through their means to open the young fellow's purse-strings; but, again, the attempt was a failure. He entered willingly enough into company of the kind, but completely turned the tables against them. His weakest point, that of an intense love of female admiration, was protected by his discovery of a still weaker in theirs, that combined of improvidence

and lavish display. On this he built a system of his own, and became to them a sort of professional money-lender. This suited him in every way. He never made a pecuniary advance without a good collateral security, generally jewellery, and his vanity was flattered by their prodigal expressions of affection and esteem when wanting a renewal of a bill or a further advance.

"It was not likely that a life like his would continue long without obtaining for him a considerable amount of notoriety. Those with whom he came in contact flattered him exceedingly, sometimes indeed so grossly, that his vanity, even then, must have almost taken the form of insanity for him not to have perceived he was, to his flatterer, an object of ridicule. It need hardly be said he had not one acquaintance of any really respectable standing in society, although several had good family names. If the former did not associate with him, his notoriety gained him their passing attention, and he easily taught himself to believe their admiration at the same time. His principal desire, however, continued for the admiration of the fair sex, and as I have already stated, those with whom he generally associated gave him so much of it, that, without any figure of speech, it began to act upon his brain.

"He continued this singular sort of life for some years, a slave to his two principal vices, vanity and avarice, and both appeared to increase as he got older, receiving servility—often mock—from those in his power, and the contempt of all not in his debt. His manners were forward and impudent in the highest degree towards all women without protection (for he was a coward); but he restrained himself within proper bounds to all others. With men he was either servile or domineering, according as they were or were not in his power.

"Some ten years after he commenced the life of 'a man about town,' as he was one morning engaged at home with his solicitor, with whom he had always kept on terms of intimacy, the door of the drawing-room opened, and a woman, unushered by a servant, entered. How she had contrived to get there it would be difficult to say, for her appearance was not such as to gain her admittance into any house beyond the hall, without especial orders. Her clothes were scanty, threadbare, and torn. Her face, naturally ill-favored, showed the ravages of sickness and want, and she appeared so much exhausted, that she could hardly hold herself erect. Brown, though startled at her appearance, recognized her in a moment,—she was his cousin. Annoyed at her presence, he asked her sharply, 'what she did there?'

"She informed him, in a faint voice, that she was in great distress, and that she had latterly been very ill and a patient in the hospital. That in her present poor condition, and ill health, she could not obtain employment as a servant, and she had called to ask him for a little assistance to enable her to start in some small way of business, as she feared her strength would never allow her to undertake any hard labor again.

"The time she had occupied in speaking was sufficient to allow Brown to recover his presence of mind. He told her abruptly, he had nothing to give her, and ordered her never to apply to him again. The poor woman, urged on by her necessities, reminded him, that formerly he had obtained money from her, and she hoped in his turn, he would now give her some assistance.

"Instead of admitting the justice of this most cogent argument, which, by the by, annoyed him exceedingly, he replied, that he had no remembrance of any transaction of the kind. If she had any claim upon him, she could

apply to his solicitor, the gentleman beside him, at his office, and in office hours, who would act for him on the occasion, although, he believed, she would not get much by the move, as, according to her own statement, he was not of age at the time, and the debt, if indeed it ever existed, was long since barred by the statute of limitations.

"The poor woman, still in the same mild tone, replied that she made no claim; it was only to his charitable feeling that she appealed.

"The wretch coarsely replied, 'that he never gave to beggars.'

"This remark acted powerfully both on the woman and the solicitor. The latter, though disgusted at his client's behavior, had just received instructions from him to commence proceedings, which promised to be lucrative, against a debtor, and had turned his face to the window that its expression might not be seen. He now turned rapidly round with an involuntary movement to protest against the remark. The woman, however, required no abettor. She drew her frail form up to its full height, and answered her cousin only by a look—but such a look! The change that had taken place in her ill-favored countenance in a moment was miraculous; all notice of her features was lost in the wonderful expression of her face. There was in it the look of a loving woman and an avenging angel combined. The quivering lip toldthe mortal; the stern, open, and commanding eye, the spirit. There was nothing fierce in it; it was rather the stern coldness of offended justice. There was in it no threat, but a direct certainty of retribution, which nothing could avoid.

"The words the solicitor was about to utter died on his lips. Even his client was moved, and as the speechless woman turned towards the door, he said to her—

"'I wish always to act honorably and handsomely to

you. If you can obtain a situation, I am perfectly ready to give you an excellent character."

"The woman left, and I have heard nothing more of her. I told you, I think, some time since, that I believed the direct judgment of Heaven fell oftener on sinners in this world than is generally imagined, and this man's fate is, in my opinion, a case in point. Although no effect was perceptible on the mind of the sordid wretch by the woman's visit, all annoyance it had occasioned had perhaps vanished before the lapse of an hour, yet his insanity began to develop itself immediately afterwards. I am the more inclined to believe it, from the fact that his particular form of mania appeared as an exaggeration of his particularly prominent vices. His vanity increased till he thought himself something more than mortal, yet his natural meanness of disposition, which still clung to him, saved him from ruin, by circumscribing his attempts at exhibiting his self-importance. I do not know in what manner, or by whose application, the statute of lunacy was obtained, but the result was, that he was placed here under my care. Of course, I had no voice in the matter, or he would not have remained here a day; but here he is, and I cannot afford to disobey my orders. Had I my own will, he would not remain here a week longer, for I assure you his presence is to me a source of continual annoyance."

Long before the doctor had concluded the narrative, my aversion to the fellow was as great as his own. For some time I avoided him on all possible occasions, but as he continued to thrust his society on me, I began to wish I could find some means of punishing him for the annoyance he gave me. At last an opportunity presented itself; but as the principal actor in my scheme of vengeance was also a remarkable character, I must crave the reader's permission to introduce her somewhat particularly.

Before the doctor accepted the appointment of superintendent of Shirley Hall, he was assistant physician in a large pauper lunatic asylum. Among his patients was a woman who had been a cook, and a skilled one too, in a gentleman's family. Dinah Searle, for that was her name, unlike most cooks, who are reported to occupy their leisure hours in making up caps, spent hers, to improve her mind, in reading novels, and had thereby increased a somewhat romantic disposition, till she made it utterly ridiculous. Dinah, although without any personal attractions, considered herself as a most lovable creature, and fondly imagined that men were continually falling victims to her charms. At the same time, she never encouraged their advances, her heart having been engaged, while yet very young, by a most amiable and talented man, who, however, from his very superior position in society to hers, was unable to make her his wife. Whether this gentleman ever existed, or was altogether a mythical offspring of her novel-reading propensity, it is impossible to say; but most probably the latter suggestion is the correct one, as she occasionally hinted that he was a "gallant officer." That Dinah, in her time (she was now considerably past forty), had received several offers of marriage from divers respectable men is certain, and it is equally certain that she had refused them all, rather than break her faith to the real or ideal object of her affections. But in rejecting the offers made to her, it must not be imagined that it occasioned her no pain—on the contrary, she used to say that she felt bitterly the grievous disappointment she had occasioned to so many worthy men, but still she continued inflexible in her pledge to her only love.

Unfortunately, after a time, Dinah had made so many worthy men unhappy, and it preyed so heavily on her spirits, that she was obliged to seek for consolation, and

she found it. She also fancied herself weakly—most cooks do—and she was advised to have great faith in beer, which would do more to strengthen her than all the doctor's stuff put together. She tried it, and found it answer admirably. She commenced with a pint daily, which she increased to a quart, and that again to three pints—in fact, she was obliged to do it, she said, the heat of the fire having such an effect on her in her delicate health. Occasionally she had considerable difficulty in obtaining the quantity of beer she required, but she found that gin might be used as a substitute with equal effect. At last, she confined herself principally to it, as it was far more easy of transport and concealment than beer. To conclude, what with gin and beer, love and the heat of the fire, all combined, poor Dinah's brains began to give way, and she became a patient of the doctor's.

Thanks to his skill and care, she, to a great degree, recovered, and the cure promised to be permanent if she could be kept from drink. When the doctor came to Shirley Hall, he brought Dinah with him, and the place was admirably suited for her, as no beer nor spirits were allowed on the premises, and she was therefore, in a great degree, free from temptation. In her new situation, as under cook, she did her duty well and conscientiously. She still retained her affection for her old love, but she also imagined that another most worthy and honorable man admired her, and wished to marry her; but as she could not give him the heart in return, she refused to listen to his addresses. Who this gentleman was nobody knew, and the absurdity was the greater, as she never received any letters. The doctor considered her present admirer as a harmless phase of her insanity, and he let it take its course. It gave, in fact, very little trouble. Her low spirits at being obliged to refuse the worthy man,

occasionally, perhaps three or four times a year, came on, and increased in intensity daily for a week or ten days, when they culminated in a violent fit of hysterics, after which she became calm and contented, and continued so for some months, when the low spirits again attacked her, and again vanished after another hysterical fit. Every one was used to it, and it excited no comment.

After a little consideration, I determined, if possible, to make Dinah believe that Mr. Brown was the estimable man at present in love with her, but whose love she could not return. To accomplish this I wanted a coadjutor. As neither myself nor any man in the establishment had sufficient opportunity of conversing with Dinah to fairly introduce the subject to her, I determined on applying to Mme. Reumont, whose case I have already described, for assistance. I, however, experienced considerable difficulty. I unfortunately chose a moment for making my application when the spirit of Xerxes was strong within her. The proposition caused great umbrage to the dignity of the Eastern despot, and the idea of entering into the love affairs of a supplementary cook in a lunatic asylum was received with every mark of disapprobation. On my again bringing the subject before her, I obtained a more patient hearing. I soon found the feeling of womanhood to be latent in the ex-governess, and after having narrated to her the history of Mr. Brown, as the doctor had told it to me, the satisfaction to be obtained by resenting the insult offered to her sex was so great, that at last she consented to take part in the conspiracy. It was then resolved that she should work upon the credulity of Dinah, and that my task should be to excite the amorous susceptibilities of Mr. Brown, by informing him that no man had ever been able to make a conquest of Dinah's heart.

Whether Mme. Reumont possessed more tact than I did, or whether Dinah's credulity was more easily acted upon than Mr. Brown's, I know not, but, certainly, my sister conspirator succeeded far more rapidly than I did. I endeavored, by every opportunity in my power, to draw him out on the subject of his female conquests, and, as far as that went, I had nothing to complain of; but the moment I endeavored to pique his curiosity about Dinah, and defy him to captivate her, he appeared to take no interest in the matter whatever. "*Labor improbus vincit omnia.*" I persevered, and at last succeeded. I accomplished this, however, by somewhat changing my tactics, and Brown determined on trying to captivate her, solely for the purpose of making her ridiculous. With this charitable intent he commenced operations. He took every opportunity of peering into the kitchen, of meeting her as if accidentally, and then making the most tender eyes at her, and other little stratagems, such as he believed to be irresistible. Mme. Reumont, on her side, kept up the game admirably. She begged of Dinah not to listen to his advances, for, though respectable, he was a most dangerous man. This, of course, excited Dinah's curiosity, although it was without danger, as far as the possibility of his making any impression on her heart went.

Although Dinah resolutely determined on being true to her first love, she resolved to examine a little more closely her new conquest, and judge for herself whether he was or was not the irresistible personage Mme. Reumont had painted him. With this intent she more than once purposely passed him in the garden or on the stairs. On each occasion he cast on her his most impassioned glances, while she, in return, looked at him with a plaintive, half-reproachful expression of countenance, intended to show him the pain his advances cost her.

It is proverbially difficult to play with fire and not run the risk of being burned, and it appeared to be Mr. Brown's fate to prove the truth of the proverb. By degrees I found the strong expressions of contempt he at first made use of, vanish, and others, by no means uncomplimentary to Dinah, supply their place. On these occasions I always attempted to add fuel to fire, by assuring him that all his blandishments were in vain, and that the man who could make Dinah false to her first love, must possess far greater attractions than could be found in his person, great as they might be.

These deprecatory remarks, I soon found, did not pass without their effect. He seemed to wince under them, and a certain conceited jerk of the head he gave when he heard them, showed it was his intention to prove that I had underrated him. The flirtation grew warmer and warmer, and the *accidental* meetings between Dinah and her admirer more frequent. It was also clear to me he was really falling in love with her, and the remarks he used to make to me about her proved it.

"He had never," he said, "in his life met with so much virtue and fidelity in woman, and he admired her the more for it, rake as he was." Although not handsome, he admitted, there was a beauty of expression in her countenance seldom met with, and that, with him, went further than regularity of feature; but, above all, it was the difficulty of success he experienced that he admired most in her. "In all my love affairs together," he told me with an air of perfect fatuity, "I have not found half the resistance I have in that girl."

The reader must not imagine the slightest injury was being done to Dinah's feelings in carrying out our plot; nothing could have been further from the intention of either Mme. Reumont or myself. There was not the

slightest probability of her affections being entrapped by the detestable little dandy. If the truth were really to be told, instead of Dinah's feelings suffering on the occasion, the affair was one of triumph to her, notwithstanding the pain, she said, she felt in being obliged to refuse so estimable a man. I doubt myself whether there was any love episode in her life that, in reality, gave her greater satisfaction; and her pretended sorrow at the disappointment she was occasioning was sheer hypocrisy.

As things were evidently approaching a climax, I took an opportunity of having a lengthened interview with Mme. Reumont, so as to discuss the subject at our leisure, and definitely to decide on a plan of action. For some time we argued whether we ought to make the doctor a partner in our conspiracy or not. Mme. Reumont at first strongly objected to it, thinking the man of science would consider it derogatory to be mixed up in any plot of the kind. At last, however, I was able to overcome her objection. I so well knew the doctor's deep-rooted antipathy to Brown, that I felt assured we should have both his countenance and assistance. We next resolved that a meeting between the dandy and Dinah should take place, so as to allow him to plead his passion to her without impediment, and also to give Dinah an opportunity of personally declining the honor offered her. On Mme. Reumont was thrown the *onus* of getting Dinah to consent to the meeting, should Brown propose one, and it was to be my duty to persuade her admirer to apply for an interview. On the doctor I proposed throwing the task of selecting time and place.

Although I had expressed to Mme. Reumont my belief that the doctor would readily assist us, I must confess I had my doubts on the subject when it came to the point. He listened with great good-humor to the suggestion,

but for some time he appeared undecided. At last he gave way.

"With all my wish," he said, laughing, "to maintain my professional dignity in the establishment, the temptation of seeing that contemptible wretch make a greater fool of himself than usual, is too great to be resisted. I will assist you as far as I can, if you will tell me what your plans are."

I explained to him that we wished to contrive a meeting in such a spot that we could witness it without being observed, but that it was impossible for us to accomplish it without his assistance.

"You shall have it with pleasure, on the condition that you keep my agency in the matter a perfect secret, for I should not like the other patients to know any thing about it. I think it might be managed in this manner: On the day you determine for the meeting, I will take steps to keep the other patients from the northeastern part of the grounds. The meeting had better take place there, for we can place ourselves in the shrubbery, and witness all that takes place without being seen."

I promised the doctor to follow his instructions to the letter, and we parted.

As soon as I had obtained his promise to assist us, I began to break ground as cautiously as I could with Mr. Brown, to induce him to write to Dinah proposing a meeting. My task turned out a far easier one than I had imagined. The love he had conceived for Dinah had increased so much from the opposition she had shown him, that he was now ready for almost any folly.

The letter was written, and he took the opportunity of placing it in Dinah's hand, as she one day passed him on the staircase. It contained an earnest prayer, on his part, for her to meet him, mentioning the spot the doctor

had selected, and which I had proposed as an idea of my own.

Mme. Reumont, on her part, had little difficulty in persuading Dinah to attend the meeting. The only request she made was that it might be put off for a week. She gave no reason for the required delay, but the fact was, she determined on making some extraordinary toilet preparations; for, although she was resolutely determined on refusing her admirer, her pride had no objection to make him fully aware how attractive a personage she was, when she had paid proper attention to her costume. To make the effect the more striking, she took care to avoid meeting him during the interval, and the anxiety of her lover to behold her, in consequence, became almost insupportable.

The evening arrived for the interview, and a lovely one it was. It seemed perfectly adapted for a meeting of the kind. The spot chosen also was every thing which could be desired. It was at the extremity of a thick avenue of shrubs, terminating on a lovely greensward. The doctor had invited an intimate friend of his to drink tea at the asylum. This gentleman was an admirable musician, both as a singer and player. The doctor had partly informed him of our plot, and had requested him to begin his performance immediately after the tea was over, being perfectly sure the whole of the patients would remain to hear him with the exception of Mr. Brown and Mme. Reumont. As soon as the singing commenced, the doctor left and joined Mme. Reumont and myself, and we placed ourselves among the shrubs, in such a position as enabled us to see all that passed, but at the same time we were out of earshot.

"Brown was the first at the place of appointment. In dress he was perfectly resplendent. There was not a

single article in his toilet on which he had not bestowed the greatest care. His hat and boots were of the glossiest, and his gloves fitted him with the utmost exactness. His jewellery was displayed to the greatest advantage, and his linen was of dazzling whiteness. He carried in his hand a dress cane, and to complete his seductive appearance, he had stuck an eye-glass in his eye. He walked up and down impatiently, every now and then giving a jerk of his leg, for his unseen female tormentors would allow him no rest even then.

At last Dinah made her appearance. To describe her dress, and do it justice, would be impossible; it was simply, in her idea, overwhelming. True, her garments, to the keen eye of a female critic, might have been thought not to fit her as correctly as ladies generally considered desirable, but the combination of colors was most striking. Her bonnet was somewhat out of shape, it is true, but the quantity of flowers and ribbons upon it concealed to a great degree the defect. From what source she had obtained them it was impossible to say; there were more on her sole person at the moment than the whole establishment was imagined to contain. Her manner of walking on the occasion was also peculiar. There was an amount of resolution in her step, that betokened her determinately set on some point she wished to carry out, yet this was somewhat calmed down by a certain modesty of manner which, truth to say, did not seem perfectly natural. Altogether her appearance resembled, in a most extraordinary degree, the lady who comes on in a pantomime for the sole purpose of being knocked down by the clown.

As Dinah approached Mr. Brown, the affected modesty of her demeanor increased; he, on the contrary, assumed a more cajoling and conquering air. For the

moment, his invisible tormentors seemed to have left him in peace. When he met Dinah he immediately put on one of his most irresistible glances, and attempted to take her hand. This, by her pantomime, she resolutely declined. He then appeared to commence some powerful style of reasoning, to which she evidently listened with attention, replying however, occasionally, with a mournful shake of the head. He was then silent for a moment as if waiting for an answer, but not receiving it, he succeeded in seizing her hand, which he attempted to raise to his lips. At the same instant, as if the patience of his tormentors could restrain itself no longer, he gave so violent a jerk with his leg, that it resembled in strength the kick of a horse. Whatever might have been the intention of his fair unseen admirers or enemies, it certainly had the effect of making him drop the hand of Dinah.

He now commenced his courtship with words alone, but the jealousy of his unseen tormentors seemed to have been completely aroused, for all the time he was speaking he kept on the jerking movement without cessation. Dinah still appeared to say but little, but she looked at him in a most imploring manner. To add force to the few words she uttered, she at last placed her two hands together as if supplicating his silence, when he, as if to make his persuasion doubly strong, attempted to press her raised hands between his own, but no sooner was the contact complete, than he gave a spring which raised him completely from the ground. It seemed as if the jealous unseen fair were not simply content with attracting his attention, but by some cruel feminine artifice had contrived to inflict on him considerable pain as well. Dinah seemed astonished at his behavior, and the expression of her countenance fully betrayed it. He attempted to

distract her attention by fresh advances, but the spasmodic movement in his legs became worse than ever. Dinah now appeared to be alarmed, and, possibly to make herself more interesting in his eyes, gave intimation of the approach of an hysterical fit. Brown, thinking her on the point of falling, attempted to support her in his arms, but his antics became worse than ever. They kept on without ceasing. He appeared at last utterly incapable of restraining himself, and his movements were so violent that he looked like one of those card-board figures which are made to amuse children, and which jerk their legs when a string is pulled. To such a degree, in fact, did his antics arrive, that the doctor thought it necessary to put an end to the scene.

"My dear Mr. Brown," he called out, "what can be the matter with you?"

In an instant Dinah's hysterical symptoms vanished, and she rapidly disappeared among the shrubs. The doctor advanced and offered Brown, who appeared completely exhausted, his arm to conduct him to the house; but Mme. Reumont and myself thought it better not to make our appearance.

The next day I asked Brown what success he had had. He told me he should have succeeded perfectly, had it not been for the unfortunate appearance of the doctor. I advised him to try again, and he promised me he would. To conclude, each time he attempted to meet Dinah, his antics recommenced, and when at last he gave up his attacks on her heart, so completely was his mind imbued with the thought of his involuntary dance, that he could not restrain himself, but commenced it again whenever he saw her. So that whenever he annoyed me, I had only, by some stratagem, to bring him within the sphere of Dinah's influence, to inflict on him a fitting punishment.

CHAPTER XV.

MEMORY IN MADNESS.

When I was one morning taking my accustomed constitutional walk in the grounds, I saw the door of communication in the wall between the two establishments open, and a singular-looking being fantastically dressed, accompanied by a keeper, enter, and make towards the house. He was a tall, thin, emaciated man, of about forty years of age. His face was pale, apparently more from privation than ill health, and his form was bent as if from weakness rather than age. Though at first sight his appearance excited my sympathy, on a second glance, a good deal of his weakness appeared more simulated than real. He was dressed in a loose suit of dark-brown cloth, and his long coat seemed cut so as to assume something of the look of a mendicant friar's frock. It was torn and ragged in several places, although the rents seemed, from their shape and position, to have been purposely made, rather than the effect of long wear or accident. On his breast he wore a large white paper cross pinned carefully on, and his whole appearance, as he moved slowly along, with his eyes bent upon the ground, was the caricature of one of the pictured saints or pilgrims of the Roman Catholic Church. As he passed me he made a low and humble obeisance, and for which compliment I was somewhat puzzled what return to make. He went into the house, where he remained for perhaps half-an-hour, and he then returned with his

keeper to his old quarters. Shortly afterwards, a gentlemanly middle-aged man left the house in company with the doctor, who accompanied him to the gate.

When the stranger had taken his leave, and the doctor was returning to the house, I accosted him, and inquired who the singular creature might be, who had made such an extraordinary appearance. He briefly replied that the poor fellow was a religious monomaniac; that in his younger days he had turned from the Protestant faith, in which he had been brought up, and became a Roman Catholic; and that he appeared to have been early imbued with some of the ultra doctrines of that creed, which had increased till insanity had developed itself. He was now not only an incurable lunatic, but, beyond that, the terrible attribute which so frequently attends religious monomania, a suicidal tendency, was also an element in his disease. To such an extent had it arrived, that he had several times attempted to destroy himself, and it was now necessary, night and day, to watch him. The doctor added that he had been placed by his friends under his care, and every thing which could be done to ameliorate so hopeless a case was adopted. "If," continued Dr. Meadows, "as you appear to take an interest in cases of the kind, you would like to know more about the poor fellow, I shall be happy to give you a sketch of his life. His history is a very singular one, at least as far as his malady is concerned. I have had much experience in cases of insanity, as you are aware, but one more extraordinary than his I never met with." I willingly accepted the doctor's offer, and a few days afterwards, he took the opportunity of relating to me the following narrative:

"Mr. Watkins, the father of the poor fellow you saw, was for many years British vice-consul, or rather consu-

lar agent, at one of the smaller Italian seaports. His wife was an Englishwoman, a good, clever, shrewd creature, who brought up her family, which consisted of two sons, during their early childhood, well and religiously, according to the tenets of the Church of England, of which both she and her husband were attached members. As her children grew older her dominion over them naturally lessened. When the elder was about twelve years of age, and the younger ten, they were taken from her charge and sent to the public school of the town in which they were living, there to receive the best instruction that institution afforded, Mr. Watkins's time being too much occupied to instruct them himself, and his income too limited to allow him to procure for them an English tutor. An understanding was, however, entered into with the head of the establishment, that the religious creed of the two boys should in no way be tampered with; and a promise also given on the part of Mr. Watkins, that his sons should abstain from, either by act or speech, showing the slightest disrespect to subjects connected with the Roman Catholic faith in the presence of their fellow-pupils. Although now generally no longer under her tuition, Mrs. Watkins continued the spiritual guidance of her sons, a task she accomplished both with zeal and ability.

"The boys continued at their school for two years without any thing occurring worthy of notice. Naturally talented, they had made good use of the opportunities afforded them by their professors. They were both excellent French and Italian scholars; and, although their accent in the classics might have been strongly condemned by an Oxford or Cambridge tutor, they knew far more of Latin and Greek than is usually found among lads of their age at an Italian university.

"At the end of the second year, however, a circumstance was brought under the notice of Mrs. Watkins, which gave both her and her husband the greatest uneasiness. Although the head of the college had religiously kept his promise of non-interference with the religious creed of his English pupils, the conduct of one of his subordinates had been far less honorable. The creed of the elder boy had not been tampered with, as he did not fall under the same influence as his brother, being in a higher class; but the younger, a lad of a very melancholy, sedate temperament, had had, unfortunately, for an instructor a bigoted creature, who carried to an extraordinary degree the reputed doctrine of Jesuitism, and considered that it would be a work of grace to place honor on one side, and restore the soul of the heretic to the bosom of the Catholic Church. How far he succeeded with the boy it is difficult to say; certainly, by the time Mrs. Watkins's attention was called to the fact, the respect her son had had for the faith he had been reared in was considerably diminished, and, as might naturally be expected under such a tutor, his tendency to the Roman Catholic creed had increased in proportion.

"No sooner was the discovery made than the boys were removed from the school. William, the elder, a remarkably clever, amiable youth, was taken into his father's office, who, beyond his official capacity, acted as agent for an eminent English mercantile firm engaged in the Italian trade. The younger, though nominally employed in the counting-house, remained principally in the society of his mother, there being hardly occupation enough for both, and the boy himself having little disposition for business.

"Unfortunately, Mrs. Watkins soon perceived that matters were very little mended with her younger son by with-

drawing him from school. While there, the attack upon his religion, though made in an insidious and dangerous manner, was tempered with some apparent regard to the wishes of his parents; but now, no longer controlled by the authority of the principal of the college, the attempt to convert him was carried on openly and defiantly. Mrs. Watkins tried to counteract the evil to the fullest extent in her power; unfortunately, that fell far short of what was required. It was impossible for her to keep a youth of his age at home all day, and when absent from her, he was always found either in a church or in the company of an ecclesiastic. His father attempted to interpose his authority, and prohibit his visit to the churches and the society of the priests; but their doctrines had already taken root, and the boy quietly, but firmly, replied, that he considered his duty to God to be superior to that he owed his parents; and his father, greatly troubled, feared to carry out his intention of further remonstrance, lest he might drive him immediately to enter the Catholic Church, and thus destroy the slight probability which remained of his son's remaining a Protestant.

"Another circumstance distracted for the moment the attention of the parents from the feared conversion of their son to the Church of Rome. A sister of Mrs. Watkins's, to whom she was strongly attached (a widow with one daughter, a girl about fourteen years of age), had lately been attacked by symptoms of consumption, and had been advised to try the air of a warmer climate to stop the progress of the disease. As her sister was in very poor circumstances, her husband having been a lieutenant in a line regiment, with little more than his pay to depend on, Mrs. Watkins hastened to invite her to take up her residence with her, and the invitation was most readily accepted.

"Mrs. Watkins received her sister with great affection, but with little pleasure. Great as was her natural joy at seeing one she loved so fondly, it was more than neutralized by the sorrow she felt at observing her altered appearance. The seal of death was already on her brow, and it needed no scientific *dictum* to prove the case was hopeless. The daughter, an amiable little girl of about fourteen years of age, of no great beauty, seemed to be innately aware of the misery which hung over her, but which she did not even dare to whisper to herself. All the preparations which the somewhat deficient arrangement of an Italian house permitted, Mrs. Watkins made for her sister, and the long descent, which diseases of the kind meet with in their path to the grave, promised to be as easy as the melancholy circumstances of the case would allow.

"The winter passed and Mrs. Morgan, though greatly reduced in strength, was still alive; but the return of spring brought about one of those false promises of recovery which characterize the disease, raising the hopes of the anxious relatives, and then crushing them unpityingly. In the mean time, things had gone on quietly in Mr. Watkins's own family. His sons had changed, during the last year, little in manner, but greatly in appearance. In this respect, William, the elder, had wonderfully improved. He was tall, well made, and altogether as handsome a young fellow as could be met with. There was an open, candid expression in his countenance which particularly attracted the attention of those introduced to him. Although without the excessive civility, or rather servility, of Italian good breeding, his manners were far more unabashed and courteous than is generally found in English lads of his age. His father was justly proud of him. It was singular, however, to mark his

conduct when any one was speaking favorably of the lad, and the affected modesty of manner in which he would then express his satisfaction at at his son's conduct. 'He was,' he was happy to say, 'a very good lad, and that was sufficient. His good looks might be taken from him at any time; the accident of a moment or a fit of illness might destroy them all; but with integrity and industry, combined with religious and moral principles, he might obtain respect and affluence in this world, and eternal happiness in the next.' All this he would say with an abnegation of pride in his boy so faint, so artificial, that the most casual observer could see through it. With the mother it was very different. Her pride in her son brooked no artifice. She spoke of him as she loved him—as something more than human. When hearing him favorably mentioned, her eye would light up with pleasure, and no matter how high might be the compliment she heard passed on him, her ready speech indorsed the statement with still higher praise.

"The younger son, without being plain, was still far from handsome. His features were regular, almost feminine in their regularity; but there was a downcast expression in them, a want of sincerity, which pierced through his courtesy, and displeased, or at any rate made all doubt the truth of his professions. His father he obeyed, though with a peculiarity of manner which not only showed, but which he evidently intended should be shown, that he was doing it only from a sense of duty, and that his obedience would vanish the instant he should consider a higher duty to be paramount. Even in his respect for his father there appeared a certain element of dislike. Mr. Watkins behaved to him, however, with uniform kindness; and if, as might naturally be expected, William was his favorite, he concealed the preference

in a manner impossible of detection. To his mother, Edmond behaved as if he really loved her. He was obedient to her in all things which did not touch upon religion; attentive to her wants, and showed an amount of affection to her generally, which those who knew him in his other relations of life would hardly have believed possible.

"Winter came on again, and Mrs. Morgan sank under its influence. Mrs. Watkins felt severely the loss of her sister. She was the last left to her of a numerous family, and the love she bore her was intense. Silently, and by night, the corpse of her much-loved relative was placed in the grave, but long her spirit seemed to dwell in the home of those so warmly attached to her, and by whom she had been so tenderly cherished.

"She left, however, one behind her whose fate seemed greatly to be pitied: it was the young girl Emma. Helpless and destitute, without sufficient education to allow her to maintain herself as a teacher, even if her age would have allowed it, without strength of constitution to permit her to obtain a livelihood as a milliner or shopwoman, without a shilling in the world she could call her own, for her mother's small annuity died with her—a being more destitute than she was could hardly be imagined. Fortunately, she was left in the hands of those who fully sympathized with her, and who were determined to assist her to the utmost of their power. Mr. Watkins's first care was to instruct her in some accomplishment which would place in her hands the means of existence. Emma had naturally a sweet voice, though without much power, and a good ear for music. Of all accomplishments singing is the easiest to obtain in Italy, and Mr. Watkins's first care was to find for her a good master. Both Mr. and Mrs. Watkins spoke Italian fluently, and they soon grounded the girl in the grammar of the

language. Emma was both quick and willing, and having ample opportunities of conversing in the language, she soon made good progress. French she already knew well, for her mother had resided with her for some years in France, and a little attention now to the grammatical part of the language soon made her able not only to converse with propriety, but also to write it correctly and elegantly. Mrs. Watkins also imparted to her as well as she was able the elements of the history of her own country, and her husband the necessary rules of arithmetic, in all of which Emma profited so rapidly as to promise in a few years, if her health would permit, to be able to obtain an honorable livelihood as a governess.

"All things now went on favorably enough for the next two years, when one of those tremendous calamities, which occasionally reverse in a few days the hopes and exertions of years, overtook the Watkins family. The cholera had broken out in the town, and though it made its first visits only to the dirtiest and poorest parts, the cases had been so rapid and so fatal as to prove the disease had made its appearance in its most virulent and terrible form. The impunity which at first sight appeared to exist from its attacks among the wealthier portion of the population, brought on an amount of indifference to the danger which hung over them, and which in a few days plunged many of the most respectable families in the greatest distress, and among others that of the Watkins. Mr. Watkins had experienced for a few days a slight premonitory attack which he had neglected, less perhaps from indifference than ignorance, the disease being then comparatively unknown in Europe. Collapse came on without an hour's notice, and in spite of all the remedies which were used to rally him, the next day he was a corpse.

"It would be impossible to describe the intense grief of the family at this terrible blow. Sorrow for his loss closed their eyes to all other considerations for the moment. All grieved greatly for him, for he was sincerely beloved by them all, but the sorrow of his widow was overwhelming. William and Emma were unremitting in their attentions to her, concealing as much as possible their own sorrow, with a view to diminish hers.

"The conduct of the younger son was of a very different description. He certainly showed great feeling for his mother, and wept when he saw her weep, but the loss of his father he appeared to feel but little. When his mother spoke of the hope of again meeting her husband in heaven, he would turn away his head to conceal a frown. He evidently allowed his dislike to the heretic to drown the love he owed the father. More than once he endeavored to persuade his mother, when her grief appeared inconsolable, to allow him to introduce to her a Catholic priest, but he received on these occasions so direct a refusal, that it would have deterred any one, not actuated by religious zeal, from repeating the demand. Finding she so resolutely refused the consolation he offered her, he spent his days in prayer in the churches, and left the care of his mother and the entire management of the business to his brother William.

"The funeral over, and the first burst of sorrow somewhat subsided, Mrs. Watkins began to think over her prospects for the future. She called to her aid her now only adviser, her son William. The clear-headed lad soon brought the apparent chaos into some sort of form. His mother, he found, would have no claim for a government pension even if she had the requisite patronage to obtain it; for his father, although by courtesy called a vice-consul, was only a consular agent. There only remained then, as

data for their future operations, the assets his father was possessed of at the time of his death. These were small indeed. There remained, after his liabilities were met, and his furniture sold, a sum barely amounting to eight hundred pounds.

"Although it will be perceived Mrs. Watkins's prospects were far from flattering, she still looked at them with that unflinching courage so frequently found in women. She had now to begin the world again, with a capital which, if vested in a good security, would barely produce her forty pounds a-year, and with that she not only had to provide for her own maintenance, but for that of her younger son and niece, as well; William, the elder, being now fully able to provide for himself, and, if tolerably fortunate, of contributing in some slight degree to the support of his mother. Emma, the niece, had considerably improved in appearance since her residence in Italy. She was still far from handsome, but the amiable expression of her countenance fully compensated for a somewhat irregularity of feature, and never was expression the mirror of the mind more completely than with that young girl. She was amiable to all, and was in return loved by all with whom she mixed. The feeling, almost of charity, with which Mrs. Watkins had first received her had long since vanished, and an affection as pure and disinterested as that of a mother for her own child now supplied its place. The thought of throwing upon the girl the *onus* of supporting herself as a governess had long since vanished, and Emma was now looked upon as necessary a member of their home as Mrs. Watkins herself.

"Many and long were the consultations the poor widow had with her son William, on the state of her affairs, but, at last, they arrived at a definite conclusion.

As William was unknown to the firm in London, with whom his father corresponded, it would be hopeless for him to think of obtaining the same position, his age alone precluding the possibility. The consular agency had already been filled up; and as not a tie was left to induce Mrs. Watkins to remain in Italy, it was resolved that the family should return to England with as little delay as possible, and there mark out for themselves some path by which they might arrive at the means of maintaining themselves, if not in affluence, at least in respectability. Emma, of course, offered no objection, being but too glad to reside with those who treated her so kindly, and whom she loved so fondly. With the younger son, however, the case was very different; he showed the most violent objection to leaving Italy. He, at first, resolutely refused to accompany his mother, and attempted to make friends with some of the principal ecclesiastics of the place to induce them to allow him to enter a seminary, to be educated for the Roman Catholic priesthood; but they, whether from the fact that without his mother's consent he would be penniless, and, in a manner, thrown upon their hands, or that it might create scandal in separating a widow from her son, declined to assist him in the matter. On his persevering, they adopted a somewhat temporizing course, and advised him, for the benefit of the Holy Catholic Church, to accompany his mother to England, and there, in that land of heresy, endeavor to convert others to the true faith, and thereby prove himself a good son of the Church. Cajoled by these arguments, he gave way, and promised his mother he would accompany her without further objection. A short time afterwards, Mrs. Watkins's affairs being satisfactorily arranged, she, accompanied by her sons and niece, left Italy to try her fortune in England.

CHAPTER XVI.

MEMORY IN MADNESS—CONTINUED.

ARRIVED in England, Mrs. Watkins took a quiet lodging in a respectable street in Islington, till such time as she had determined what course she should pursue. Her first step was to call upon the different acquaintances of her late husband in London. None held out much hope of being able to assist her in finding employment for her sons, though all received her with kindness and good feeling. She then determined, after a short delay, to send her son William, in person, thinking that his gentlemanly manners and handsome appearance might influence them in his favor. Although the opinion a mother forms of her eldest son proverbially differs from that formed by a stranger, William was an exception to the rule, for all received him warmly, and one gave him a letter to a small firm engaged in the Italian trade, who at that moment were in want of an assistant who could correspond in and speak fluently the Italian language. William started off for the house immediately, and arrived shortly before it closed for the day. The aspect of the place showed symptoms of doing business only on a most limited scale, nor did the appearance of the principal hold out much prospect of improvement. Although the firm was styled Nugent & Co., Italian and provision merchants, Mr. Nugent himself was the only person who possessed any interest in it. He was a little, mean, pock-marked man of perhaps sixty years of age, irritable in

manner, harsh in voice, and dirty in person. His house, which was situated in a street near Finsbury Square, was a fitting habitation for such a master. It was a narrow, eight-roomed house, with exceedingly dirty windows; those especially of the ground-floor, where the business was carried on, had, apparently, not been cleaned for months. The floor of the shop, or warehouse, as it was called, was so covered with accumulated dust, hardened down by an occasional sprinkling of water by the shop-boy, that it now had the look of a dried road; in fact, the whole place, in appearance, was in keeping with the proprietor, who would have been utterly misplaced in a more respectable establishment.

"Mr. Nugent received William in a little back-room he called his counting-house. He read the letter carefully, and apparently slowly, but he was, from time to time, furtively employed in examining the applicant over his spectacles. When he had finished, he calmly folded up the letter and placed it in his desk, which he locked. 'So, young man,' he said, 'you have never yet been in a situation?'

"'No, not in England, sir, certainly; but I have been three years employed in my father's office in Italy?'

"'Why did your father leave Italy?'

"'He is dead, sir.'

"'You speak Italian, and correspond fluently in that language, I understand?'

"'Yes, sir; and I can carry on a correspondence in French as well.'

"'Do you know any one in London?'

"'No, sir; but I have no doubt more than one of the houses my father transacted business occasionally with, will speak to my respectability.'

"'It is somewhat irregular to take an assistant with-

out some better recommendation; but I have no objection to give you a trial if the firms you mention speak of you as you say. My terms are twenty-five pounds a-year, with board and lodging.'

"William winced a little on hearing the terms; but, as he had determined to relieve his mother of the expense of his maintenance, he made no further remark than to signify his assent to the proposition.

"'Your duties,' said Mr. Nugent, 'will be those of an ordinary assistant in a house of business. Beyond that you will write, from my dictation, all correspondence, but the books I keep myself. Where do you live now?'

"William gave him the address.

"'Very well, I shall make inquiries at the houses you mention, and if the answers are satisfactory, you can enter on your duties the day after to-morrow. You will understand, that if you do not hear from me to the contrary, I shall expect you.'

"William then took his leave, and proceeded to Islington to inform his mother of the events of the day.

"Mrs. Watkins was not too well pleased with William's description of Mr. Nugent, nor with the amount of salary offered. She also strongly objected to her son sleeping at the house of business; they had never been parted, and she looked with terror at the proposition. William, on his side, argued the necessity of his accepting the appointment.

"'You see, mother,' he said, 'I have now one great drawback this situation will remove. I have no opportunity of applying for a better appointment till I have proved in England that I am capable and trustworthy. I need not remain with Mr. Nugent longer than I please, and, certainly, that will not be longer than I can find a more agreeable employer, but it would be folly in me to

reject the present offer. We shall meet very often. I am promised permission to leave the house every Sunday, and you may be certain, my dear mother, no society will have greater charms for me than your own.'

"His mother, sorely against her inclination, was obliged to submit to these arguments, and the subject dropped. As nothing was heard from Mr. Nugent during the next two days, William entered on his new duties.

"In the mean time, Mrs. Watkins had determined on her own course of action. She had been advised, by a respectable solicitor to whom she had been introduced, to invest the principal portion of her money in the purchase of an annuity on her own life. At first she made some objection to the proposition, thinking it appeared somewhat selfish on her part to expend so much on herself; but her legal friend argued so warmly that the interest of the family depended so much upon her being placed beyond the reach of want, that she followed his advice, and invested the money as proposed. But as the amount, fifty pounds a year, was insufficient to provide food, lodging, and clothing for herself, her younger son, and niece, she was obliged to look round to discover some other plan for increasing her income, especially as William's salary was too small to allow him to afford her any assistance from that source. For her younger son, there was little hope of his being any thing but a continual expense to her. His ideas of religion began to assume so peculiar a form, that she was inclined to doubt whether there might not be something of insanity in them. More than once this painful thought presented itself to her imagination, but each time she drove it away as something too terrible to be real. He had conceived the idea that the possession of money was sinful, and that in case he refused to accept it, under any circumstances, Providence would always

provide him with the means of existence. His mother tried all in her power to combat this foolish idea, but although he would drop the argument, it was more from respect to her than from conviction that he was in error. At every opportunity, he was in one or other of the Catholic churches, never missing a religious function at which he could possibly be present. As he was totally indifferent on the subject of dress, his clothes cost his mother but little; and as abstinence and mortification were points in his creed to which he particularly held, the cost of his board was far less than even she, with her limited means, could have wished.

"With Emma, the case was very different; she was perfectly well qualified to assist in the maintenance of the family. She was now seventeen years of age, and appeared a year or two older. She was tall and well made, and, although not handsome, was still attractive in appearance, and her lady-like manners and sweet expression of countenance gained her the good-will of all with whom she was acquainted. She was, in most things, tolerably well educated. In French, Italian, and singing, she was far more accomplished than the generality of governesses. Her voice was strong, sweet, and flexible, her ear correct, and her taste good. She was, in fact, admirably adapted as a teacher of singing, for to her other musical qualifications she combined an easy method of explanation, and an unlimited amount of patience. To have found her an appointment as a governess in a private family would have been a task but of little difficulty, but, as has been before stated, Mrs. Watkins loved her as her own daughter, and she was too perfectly the mother not to tremble at the idea of a separation. After some little delay, she procured for Emma three pupils in private families, and the emoluments arising from these, added

to Mrs. Watkins's annuity, contrived comfortably to keep the wolf from the door.

"Another year passed over the heads of the Watkins family without leaving behind it any thing particularly worthy of record. Emma retained her pupils, by whom she was much liked, and she could easily have procured more, but her constitution was exceedingly delicate, and she was incapable of much exertion. As one portion of her plan of teaching was by singing over to her pupils the songs she taught them, and thereby allowing them to catch the expression of the music, the fatigue was naturally great on the chest of a person evidently predisposed to consumption, and Mrs. Watkins feared that greater exertion might tend to develop the threatened malady.

"The younger son still continued without employment, in fact, he was incapable of it. Fortunately the symptoms of religious insanity had not increased, but, although maternal affection tried to prove they had diminished, all others were aware there had been no change for the better.

"William continued at the same house of business. He was as much liked by his employer as it was possible for him to like any one, or, in other words, William, by his attention to business, his ability and integrity, had made himself of great use to the crabbed old man, and he looked upon the young fellow with the same eye of favor he would have regarded a good bargain. The health of Mr. Nugent, also, had become very uncertain, and he was frequently obliged to keep his room for days together. At last, his medical adviser informed him that change of air was necessary, or at least, that he should sleep in the country, as the air of the metropolis evidently did not agree with him. This could easily be arranged. Mr. Nugent was a widower with one child, a daughter, married to a cashier in one of the city banks. She re-

sided in Camberwell, from whence her husband came in every day to business. It was proposed by her that her father should reside with them. 'Every thing,' she said, 'could be easily arranged. The time her father would leave for business in the morning would be the same as her husband's. As both were in the habit of dining in the middle of the day, it would be little more trouble for the servants, and the change of air would do him more good than all the doctors.' These and many other arguments of the same domestic description so far prevailed on the old man, that he promised to adopt the suggestion, provided he could make such arrangements at the house of business as would allow him to live with his daughter without increasing his own expenditure.

"It is useless to go into the different ideas which entered the old man's mind to accomplish this somewhat difficult proposition, but all of them tended to throw, if possible, the extra cost on William. At last he determined that he would give up the dwelling portion of the house in town to Mrs. Watkins and her family, and that, in consequence, William should submit to a reduction in his present limited salary. After having arranged in his mind the different arguments he intended submitting to his dependent, to prove the arrangement to be an equitable one, he called William into the counting-house for the purpose of proposing it to him. He was, however, somewhat surprised at the result of the interview. William, though a good-natured fellow in the main, was at the same time a good man of business, and, as such, he now began to form a more correct opinion of his own worth. For some time past the duties of the counting-house had almost entirely devolved upon him; not from any wish on the part of his employer to place in the hands of his assistant any greater power, but from in-

ability from ill health to perform them himself. William had thus been thrown frequently into communication with the managers and principals of other firms, and he easily perceived he was held by them in esteem and good feeling. He also found he could easily obtain another situation not only more lucrative, but which would enable him to reside with his mother and family, and to be at the house of business only in the day-time.

"But there was a second motive-power which induced William to attempt to obtain another situation, so as to be able to reside at home with his mother. It was the strong and increasing affection he had for his cousin Emma. That the girl was aware of it was not to be doubted, but that he had declared his affection to her was by no means so certain. She admired, even if she did not love him; for he was not only exceedingly handsome, but a domesticated, amiable, and kind-hearted young fellow into the bargain. Another point likely to interest Emma in his favor, was the attention and respect he invariably showed his mother; a qualification not likely to pass unnoticed by so amiable and affectionate a girl.

"The conversation between William and Mr. Nugent commenced by the latter first alluding to the ordinary topics of the business which had occurred during the last four-and-twenty hours, and that having terminated satisfactorily, Mr. Nugent paused for a moment to collect his thoughts, so as to broach the matter in a courteous manner. It was therefore with some surprise that he heard William say, 'If you please, sir, I wish to speak to you about my salary. I should like it to be increased.'

"'I think,' said the old man, angrily, 'that you are very handsomely paid; and if you are not contented, you can go.'

"'Very well, sir; I will do so whenever you please.'

"Mr. Nugent looked over his spectacles at the young man with astonishment.

"'I think you are a very foolish as well as very ungrateful young man. Now you have learned your business with me, you think to leave me with the idea of getting a pound or two a year more; but mark my words, you will be disappointed; there is not a firm in London that will pay you more than I do, or rather than I have done; for if you stopped it was my intention to reduce your salary.'

"'I can easily get double the salary you pay me, sir; that is to say, if I reside at home with my mother, which I much wish to do. I have already made inquiries, and if I were to leave you to-morrow, I could obtain another situation next week.'

"'Very well, then; you can go as soon as you please.'

"'Thank you, sir; I will leave next week, then.' So saying, he left the counting-house.

"Mr. Nugent remained for some minutes undecided what to do. He was exceedingly annoyed at the idea of his assistant leaving him, but his pride for some time would not allow him to call the young man back again. He had, however, no alternative. Much as it annoyed him to give way to his dependent, he left the counting-house and followed William into the warehouse, and again opened the subject. At last all was arranged to the satisfaction of both parties. William was to receive an addition to his salary of twenty pounds a year, and board himself, and Mr. Nugent was to leave the whole of the upper part of the house in the possession of Mrs. Watkins and her family, without the payment of any rent. Mr. Nugent was to remove his furniture as rapidly as possible, and immediately afterwards Mrs. Watkins could enter.

"William was highly delighted with the arrangement,

and his mother scarcely less so. In the first place, she would be living rent free; and that, with her limited means, was a great consideration. The house itself also suited her admirably. It had a private door, and the whole of her part was perfectly shut off from the business portion of the premises. At night they had charge of the whole of the house, the two porters employed living at their own homes. It was also conveniently situated for Emma, as her pupils resided in the neighborhood of Finsbury Square, and the distance from Islington she had frequently found very fatiguing. But the greatest recommendation of all to Mrs. Watkins was the capability of living with her darling son. True, he might have obtained an appointment which would have allowed him to reside with her, but that was a probability, this a certainty.

"Before the end of a fortnight, Mrs. Watkins was perfectly at home in her new abode, and fully accustomed to the change. Mr. Nugent had far more difficulty in acclimating himself to the atmosphere of Camberwell, but by degrees he became more content with his daughter's residence, and at last he uttered no more complaints on the subject.

"The Watkins family were now as happy as it is perhaps allowed to mortals to be on earth, with one exception, and that was the anxiety caused by the peculiar state of mind of the younger son, Edmond. With him, if there was no change for the worse, it was the most flattering bulletin which could be given. A perfect understanding had taken place between William and his cousin Emma, and Mrs. Watkins, even if her son had not informed her of the fact, could not have shut her eyes to the affection which existed between them. It need not be said she fully approved of the match. It was a family union cemented by ties rarely met with. Mrs. Watkins

had for years past looked upon Emma as her child, and now there was a certainty of her continuing in the same relationship, without the fear occasionally found, of a want of sympathy between a young wife and her husband's mother.

"But although they were now affianced, a lengthened vista appeared between them and the altar, which, fair and flowery as it was, seemed longer than either approved of. It was of course impossible for them to marry till some funds had been accumulated to allow them to start in housekeeping, and out of William's limited salary that would naturally be a work of time. True it was that Emma could to a certain degree assist, as her income was even superior to his, but up to the present time she had contributed the whole of her earnings to her aunt, not only to cover her own expenses, but to assist in the maintenance of Edmond, who was a heavy drag on the widow's income.

"There was soon, however, no doubt of the second son's religious monomania. It had for some time been suspected, but a short time after his change of residence to the city, it developed itself. Hitherto he had been content with attending the different Catholic places of worship, at whatever hour in the day there might be services carried on. Now he not only had a small toy-altar fitted up in his bed-room, where he used several times a day to go through the performance of the mass, but frequently he insisted on rising many times in the night to continue the services, to the great annoyance of the family. Another phase in his malady also appeared—the certain conviction that the possession of money was an offence to God. This had, as has been already stated, shown itself to a limited extent for some time past, though he had had sense enough to keep the idea under some restraint, but now it was an incessant cause of dispute

between him and his family generally, and his brother William in particular. Of course there could be little real argument between them on a subject of the kind, it was simply an ineffectual attempt on the part of William to defend himself from the unceasing and irrational attacks of his brother.

"It required all the immense stock of patience possessed by William to submit to this infliction. After the labors of the day were over, and he had joined the family circle in the little sitting-room up stairs, with the intention of passing a happy evening in the society of those he loved, hour after hour would be embittered by the senseless attacks of his brother. Without any better arguments than might be expected from one in his unhappy condition, would he blame as a sin, what he called William's love of lucre, and the incessant labor he performed in the service of the devil, who, he warned him, would certainly claim his soul for the iniquitous sacrifice he was daily offering to him in his incessant thought of gain and worldly aggrandizement. In vain did William attempt to calm the poor lunatic, and show him that it was his employer's money which caused him his anxiety, and not his own; that man was condemned to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow; and that in his case the amount he gained was hardly more than necessary to obtain the bare means of existence. True as William's arguments might be, they were naturally lost upon his brother, who, with the pertinacity of a madman, night after night returned to the same subject.

"Unfortunately it was not only in their family circle that Edmond's attacks upon his brother were confined. He played the spy upon him during the hours of business, and would frequently interpose in the conversation between William and those who were present upon commercial affairs, and appeal to them whether the love of

money his brother was so absorbed in, would not either in this world or the next lead to his ruin. But annoying as this behavior was to William, it was immeasurably increased by the necessity he was under of explaining to those who had been present that Edmond was mentally afflicted, and incapable of rightly apprehending the language he made use of; and this was the more distressing and difficult, as Edmond's language to those unacquainted with him, showed little of the insanity complained of, his sentences being principally formed from sermons he had heard, or works he had read on the subject of the love of riches, and which, while he simply quoted them, his auditors imagined them to emanate from the poor madman himself.

"Winter passed, and the spring had nearly terminated without any thing particularly worthy of notice occurring to the Watkins family. Mr. Nugent was still alive, though now getting very infirm. He seldom visited the house of business more than twice a week, the whole management of its affairs being left to William, who continued to conduct them with ability, and the strictest integrity. It would naturally have been expected that such good service would have secured him the good-will of his employer. Such was not, however, its effect with Mr. Nugent. Instead of being pleased with the diligence of his clerk, he looked upon him with great jealousy, and the more infirm he became, the more this contemptible feeling developed itself. Feeling his own inability, the mean old man was angry at the superior energy of his subordinate, and yet was obliged to admit his integrity and value. His spite principally vented itself in irritating or sarcastic remarks on the transactions which had come under William's notice; yet when they turned out advantageously, as was almost always the case, he had not one word of satisfaction or encour-

agement to offer in return. The annoyance was particularly great when these remarks were made in the presence of strangers, and Mr. Nugent observing it, generally chose those occasions for making them especially disagreeable. William, however, had the good sense to attribute all this to the petulance and irritability of age and disease, and thus contrived to put up with it without reply, although he frequently had the greatest difficulty in keeping his temper.

Edmond's malady evidently increased, but still not to such an extent as required his being placed under any restraint. He had ceased his expostulations with his brother; indeed, it was more than probable he was incapable of continuing them. Occasionally, in more lucid intervals, he would offer some annoyance on the old subject; but he principally confined himself, when not occupied in religious observances, to watching his brother during business hours without making any remarks.

"William, on his part, had, during the long summer evenings, frequent opportunities of avoiding his brother; as well as the pleasure of passing many a happy hour in company with Emma, as in the long crepuscule of the summer's night they would walk round and round the square, or in the broader streets. To most it might appear inconsistent, or absurd, to seek for quiet happiness in the solitudes of Finsbury Square or the City Road; but as all pleasures are great or small only by comparison, the delights of these evening walks, after the fatigues of the day, in company with his betrothed were moments of calm yet intense felicity. In their state of mind, every subject of conversation afforded them pleasure, slight indeed, as many of them would appear, if now recorded. The happiest, perhaps, were those interviews when they painted in such glowing colors their future life. How they would arrange their

modest establishment. How they would dispose of the money they were to save (for, alas, they had yet realized but little), in the purchase of their furniture. What the probable cost of the different articles might be, and how long they would be saving the sum necessary to purchase them. On one of these occasions they determined to find out what money it would require to furnish their small abode and therefrom draw some reasonable conclusion what space of time would elapse before they could economize enough to commence their purchases.

"There then stood, and perhaps now stands, at the corner of Finsbury Square, a large upholsterer's establishment. Before this house the young couple stopped, wishing to enter and make the requisite inquiry; but neither had the courage to do so. It was then nearly dark, and a porter was at the moment employed in bringing out some shutters to close the warehouse for the night. One of the shopmen by chance came to the door, and seeing the pair hesitating to enter, naturally concluded there was a marriage in contemplation, and, of course, the probability of a furnishing order as well. Bashfulness, in common with the majority of his class, was the least of his defects, and he immediately accosted the young couple, inquiring whether there were any articles of furniture he could have the honor of showing them. Their stock, he continued, was larger than that of any other house in London, and their prices indisputably the cheapest; indeed, money laid out in their establishment ought simply to be regarded as an investment which might always be reconverted into cash without loss at a moment's notice. There was not an article they manufactured which was not of the best description, or that would not bear comparison with any of the first-rate west-end houses. In fact it not unfrequently happened that the fortunate purchaser made a consider-

able profit on his bargain, and that after using it for two or three years, so well did all their goods wear.

"In a few minutes William and his cousin found themselves inside the building, and their indefatigable guide showing them article after article till the young couple got so delighted with the sight, they forgot for the moment it was simply curiosity which induced them to enter, and that they were unwarrantably taking up the shopman's time. William was the first that recovered his presence of mind, but ashamed to let the shopman know the truth, he turned it off by asking whether any discount would be allowed for ready money, and other questions, which led the other to believe that in a very short time they would again visit him, and then they might most probably come to terms. After hearing that ready money was the rule of the house unless on highly respectable references, and that the lowest farthing was calculated on every article they sold, and other customary remarks of the kind, William and his cousin were ushered to the door, after having been presented with a voluminous list of prices for families furnishing, and for any sized house, from the cottage to the mansion, and also a pack of cards of the address of the shop.

"Arrived at home, the couple began to be somewhat ashamed of their visit to the cabinet-maker's, and by tacit consent they kept it a secret from Mrs. Watkins. A few days afterwards, Emma having received payment from two of her most lucrative pupils (she had now several), and her aunt wanting one or two articles of furniture, they agreed that she and William might as well purchase them at once, as they would be ready for themselves when they started in housekeeping. With that intent, when business was over, William and his cousin hurried off to the cabinet-maker's to make their purchases. They were fortunately in time, the warehouse

not being yet closed. They this time entered boldly and saw the same shopman who had behaved with so much civility to them before. He evidently recognized them, but a remarkable difference exhibited itself in his conduct. All the *empressement* he had shown the time before had now vanished, and his present behavior could not be termed, without flattery, even commonly civil. He answered abruptly to the questions put to him, and made no effort to show the articles inquired after. When William requested to see them, he coolly answered, that, on reflection, he had not got them; and when Emma remarked that she had seen them on the occasion of their last visit, she received for answer, that he was sure they would not suit her, and that, in fact, they were sold. William, annoyed at this behavior, shortly told him that if he did not wish to sell, he did not wish to buy, and the shopman answered coolly it would, perhaps, be better if he did not, as it was very possible they might disagree about it before they had finished. William, astonished and indignant at the man's behavior, had great difficulty in suppressing what he felt, but he contrived to control his feelings, and offering Emma his arm, they hurriedly left the shop.

"Many were the speculations between them on their way home, as to the cause of the extraordinary change in the shopman's behavior, which, at last, William set down to the fact that the man had discovered he was only a clerk in a very small house of business, and that, being vexed at the obsequious attention he had previously shown them, he had now taken the opportunity of proving his equality. Poor as the solution of the enigma was, it was the only one they could arrive at; and though annoyed at the circumstance, they changed the conversation, and spoke no more about it.

CHAPTER XVII.

MEMORY IN MADNESS—CONTINUED.

"WINTER came on, and with it a season of terrible calamity for the Watkins family. Edmond's insanity had now assumed such a form as occasioned his mother and brother considerable anxiety. His denunciations of what he considered William's love of money were now so fearful as often to attract the attention of the passers-by; and more than once it was with great difficulty that Mrs. Watkins, who had over the unhappy lunatic extraordinary power, could prevent him from committing a desperate assault on his brother. At last, a family conclave was held, to take into consideration a subject most painful to them all, whether Edmond's present state of mind did not necessitate his being placed under restraint, not only from the probability of some murderous attack on his brother, but from the discredit his frequent acts of violence would bring on the family.

"They had hitherto managed to conceal his affliction from Mr. Nugent, but it would be impossible to do so much longer. Besides these reasons, another equally great was brought to bear on Mrs. Watkins, and which made her lend a readier ear to the suggestion of placing the poor fellow in confinement than she would otherwise have done. A medical man in the neighborhood, now in small general practice, but who had formerly had considerable experience in brain diseases, told her how

necessary it was for religious monomaniacs to have considerable restraint placed over them, from the suicidal form the disease frequently took. He also explained to her how different was the treatment of those suffering under mental diseases in the present day from what it was formerly, and the comparative frequency of cures now performed in lunatic asylums.

"It was impossible for the reasoning faculties of the mother to deny the truth of these arguments. She submitted to the necessity, though with much sorrow, and plans were now entertained for carrying their resolution into effect. But serious and terrible difficulties arose. Of course, they could not admit the thought for one moment of placing the unfortunate young man in a pauper lunatic asylum. Such an idea would have been repugnant to the independence and self-respect of all three. To place him in a private asylum, or engage an assistant to attend him in their own house, would have necessitated an expense greater than their limited income would have allowed. There was but one course open to them, and that their medical friend promised to assist them in— to obtain for him admission into Bethlem Hospital. The doctor was acquainted, more or less intimately, with many of the city functionaries, in whose hands the greater amount of the patronage of that institution is placed, and in the course of a few days he had no doubt he should succeed. They adopted, with gratitude, the doctor's offer, and the afflicted mother commenced the preparations for her son's wardrobe, before the time came for him to leave the house.

"Whether Edmond was aware of the proceedings which were in contemplation, it is impossible to say, but certainly he was under the impression that something was plotting against him. He became more morose in

manner, and would enter into conversation with no member of his family. When in their society, the suspicious and uncertain look he would cast upon them all, plainly told them they were suspected. This increased their sorrow, but in no way altered their determination. The doctor now informed them that, on the following Tuesday, Edmond would be admitted into the hospital, all the preliminary forms having been satisfactorily gone through by him. Short as the delay was, the space between the doctor's notification of his success, and the day for Edmond leaving them was so intolerably painful, that all three felt they would have been happier had it been shorter. They seemed to think there was something unkind and dishonorable to the poor fellow in the secrecy of their plot against him; and when in his society they felt the uneasiness of guilt in their minds, occupied as they were with the kindest and most humane intentions.

"Mr. Nugent had been confined to the house since the commencement of the winter, and it was William's duty to write to him daily, and to visit him every Saturday evening, on which occasions he gave the old gentleman a more accurate summary of the proceedings of the week than had been contained in his correspondence. It was also his duty to bring with him a small cash-box, which was habitually kept in the iron safe in the counting-house. The key of the safe was left in William's possession, but the key of the cash-box, which had a strong patent lock, was kept by Mr. Nugent himself. It would, perhaps, be no easy matter exactly to account for this arrangement; but most probably the suspicious old man would not trust the cash-box in the house of his own daughter (with whom he lived by no means in a happy manner), from the fear either of her knowing its contents, or, worse, the possibility of her appropriating them to her own use.

With William it was different; he looked upon him as a sort of animated machine. He had no immediate or reversionary interest in the money of the old man; and without bringing himself within the clutches of the law, could not possess himself of it. The old man looked upon the box, when he had locked it and placed it in William's hands, to be in a sort of double custody, the first in that of the iron safe, the second in the integrity of his servant—and he had as much sympathy or gratitude for the one as for the other—while the key he kept himself as a further security on both.

"On the Saturday evening previous to the departure of Edmond for the hospital, William paid his accustomed visit to his employer. He was ushered as usual into a little third room on the ground floor, where he found Mr. Nugent; his daughter and her husband being in another part of the house, as he never spoke of his affairs in their hearing. He was, as usual, seated in an old arm-chair, with a table before him, and two lighted candles upon it. The cash-box was placed in due form, between the candles, and then William seated himself in front of his employer, in such a manner that the cash-box, when opened, had its back towards him, so that it was impossible for him to see its contents; and the old man could watch him over his spectacles, and see that no indiscreet movement on William's part could instruct him as to the treasure it contained.

"The stereotyped proceedings then commenced. William first gave him the receipts for the sums he had expended in the course of the week. These were then more than rigidly examined by the old man, for he made a point of doubting whether every second item was not more than he had authorized William to pay, or that it had not already been paid, and only on reference to his

own handwriting, containing a list of sums to be paid, which had been drawn up by him the week before, would he be convinced, and even then grudgingly.

"William next brought forward an account of the probable expenditure of the ensuing week. Of course, every item had again to be objected to, and at last admitted. The gross amount was then calculated, and the sum taken from the cash-box so furtively, that William could with difficulty see the operation. That done, he kept in his own possession the heavier amounts to be paid, telling William to send the claimants to him for that purpose; the remainder for the payment of porters' wages, and all current petty expenses, he sent to the house of business for disbursement. He then closed the lid of the cash-box with a snap, locked it, and placed the key in his pocket; then, suddenly taking off his spectacles, and looking fixedly at the young man, he said:

"'And by whose permission, sir, have you been making a lunatic asylum of my house?'

"William was utterly taken by surprise, for he had imagined that Mr. Nugent was ignorant of Edmond's misfortune, and for some moments he was unable to answer the question.

"'I assure you, sir,' at last he stammered out, 'I have done nothing of the kind.'

"'Don't tell me a falsehood, sir; you have kept a madman there for some time past.'

"'I have told you no falsehood, sir,' said William, warmly; 'my brother's insanity has not been certain for more than a week or ten days, and we have already made preparations to remove him. He will leave us on Tuesday next.'

"'See that he does, or you will have to leave yourself. I think your conduct and that of your mother, in the business, abominable.'

"'Stop, Mr. Nugent,' said William, now fairly aroused, 'I cannot remain here and hear my mother spoken of in that manner. As I do not appear to give you satisfaction, you had better provide yourself with another clerk. I shall leave you as soon as I can find another situation, and that, I am happy to say, will not take me long.'

"'You will do nothing of the kind, sir,' said Mr. Nugent, now getting alarmed, for he had really no intention of parting with William, whose services were of great value to him. 'You will at any rate remain till your proper notice has expired; and remember, sir, that then I shall not allow you to leave till I have provided myself with another clerk.'

"'You may depend upon it, sir, after your insulting behavior, I will go as soon as I can.'

"'Your salary,' said Mr. Nugent, 'is due, I believe, the latter end of next week. Not a shilling of it shall you receive if you attempt to leave me without consulting my convenience.'

"The conversation continued some time longer in the same angry tone, and at last the employer and employed separated, the later reiterating his determination to leave as soon as he could find another appointment, and the former threatening all the terrors of the law should his clerk attempt to carry his threat into execution.

"Arrived at home, William deposited the cash-box in the iron safe, there to remain till the ensuing Saturday; and then seeing all safely closed up for the night, he joined his mother up-stairs. He found Edmond and Emma with her, the former quiet, but sullen and suspicious. He evidently attempted to fix his disordered mind on what was going on, but as William did not speak of any thing beyond the ordinary routine of the household, there was little to exite either his anger or

curiosity; William purposely abstaining from mentioning his conversation with Mr. Nugent till his brother should be in bed. The poor fellow apparently saw through the manœuvre, and remained with them till it was too late to broach the subject that night, and William was obliged to postpone it till the morrow.

"It was long before William got to sleep. In the first place, his quarrel with his employer naturally occupied his mind; in the second, he heard overhead the ceaseless movement of his brother. Mrs. Watkins had taken the precaution to remove Edmond's light, under the pretext that she wanted the candle; but the gas-light in the street shone sufficiently brightly into the room to allow him to move about easily without hurting himself. At last, fatigued by the labors of the day, and accustomed to the monotonous tread of his brother overhead, William fell asleep while determining in what manner he should break to his mother his determination to quit Mr. Nugent's employment.

"The next morning he was again deprived of the opportunity. Edmond was in a most excited state, and it required all his mother's influence to keep him within the bounds of moderation. After breakfast he insisted on attending mass in Moorfields Catholic Chapel. His mother used all the persuasive arts in her power to turn him from the attempt, fearing some outbreak on his part during the service; but her efforts were in vain, go he would. 'It was,' he said, 'his duty to his God, and nothing should dissuade him.' Finding her efforts ineffectual, Mrs. Watkins had no alternative but to accompany him herself, although she did so with fear and trembling. During mass he conducted himself with propriety, but soon after the commencement of the sermon, he rose from his seat, and in spite of all her efforts, he

addressed the congregation in a most incoherent manner. For some moments considerable alarm existed among those present; but at last, by the assistance of the beadle, seconded by the entreaties of his mother, he was removed. During the remainder of the day he continued in the same excited state, requiring incessantly the attention of his mother, or brother, to prevent him from doing some rash action. At night, however, the paroxysm appeared to abate; and towards morning he consented to retire to his room, where William remained with him till he fell asleep; and then, after sitting by his side a sufficient length of time to assure himself there was no danger of his brother awaking, he sought his own bed.

"The next morning, William and the rest of the family were awakened as usual by the porter ringing the bell at the private door. William finding his brother quite quiet, determined on not disturbing him, but went on with the ordinary duties of the house. Breakfast was at length announced by Emma, and William joined the family, leaving the warehouse in charge of the porter. In the sitting-room he found his mother pale and haggard from the fatigues and anxieties of the preceding day. Edmond had not yet joined them, and William advised that on no account should he be disturbed, but that the house should be kept as quiet as possible. The meal passed over in silence, and William again went to his duties. Two o'clock, their ordinary dinner-hour, struck, and shortly afterwards Mrs. Watkins summoned William; at the same time asking him if he did not think it would be better to call Edmond, as he had not yet left his room. William stood for some moments in doubt, but at last resolved to go to Edmond's chamber and ascertain whether he was awake. Proceeding up stairs as noiselessly as possible, not to disturb him if he were still

asleep, and gently opening the door, he looked in. The next moment, with an exclamation of terror and surprise, he called to his mother, who had remained at the foot of the stairs, and told her that Edmond was not in his room. Mrs. Watkins immediately rushed up stairs, and in breathless astonishment looked around her. Edmond not only was absent, but a circumstance was apparent which proved that it was a premeditated flight, and not a sudden freak of temper. Although his clothes, with the exception of those he generally wore, were left behind, the ornaments of a small altar he had fitted up in a corner of the room were taken away, as well as his Catholic book of prayers.

"What to do, what step to take, neither mother nor son could suggest, but they stood there motionless, gazing on each other. Tears at last came to the mother's relief, and they came abundantly. Seated on the side of her son's bed, she placed her face in her hands, and gave full sway to her grief. William, somewhat recalled to his presence of mind by his mother's grief, spoke gently to her, and reminded her that it was now their duty to adopt some plan to recover the poor fellow, and not to give way to unreasoning sorrow. Mrs. Watkins, with that melancholy movement of the head so natural to women in sorrow, acknowledged the justice of what her son had said, and, drying the tears on her face, she listened to his suggestions. He proposed that she should immediately go round to the different Catholic places of worship Edmond was in the habit of attending, and request those in charge to inform her if they had seen him. On his part, he would go to the different police-stations, and request them to bring him information if they found him. To Emma he assigned the task of calling on their different friends, as well as the tradesmen in the neighbor-

hood, with whom they were acquainted, requesting, also, their assistance in recovering the unfortunate young man.

"Emma and her aunt immediately set out on their portions of the work. William was unable to do more, till the house was closed for the evening, than give notice at the nearest police-stations. Mrs. Watkins and Emma returned home late at night, tired and foot-sore. Both had received the greatest sympathy from those they had seen, both had received the most ready promises of assistance; unfortunately, neither had obtained the slightest information relative to the object of their search. Immediately after business hours were over, William started on his mission. It was nearly midnight before he returned, with as little success as his mother and cousin had before him; still every assistance had been promised him; and he had also the consolation of knowing that, before the morrow, the policemen in every district round London would be upon the alert, and it was not possible for Edmond to remain long undiscovered. This was the more certain, as it was one point in Edmond's mania that it was sinful to carry any money on his person, and penniless in London it was impossible long to exist without coming under the notice of some of the public authorities. Another contingency certainly existed, which terrified them all, but which none dared even whisper to the other, and hardly to themselves,—the possibility of his committing suicide. They, however, attempted to close their eyes to this terrible danger, which admitted no defence nor speculation, and rely on the exertions of their friends and the police.

"Tuesday passed over without any tidings of Edmond; Wednesday and Thursday followed with no better result. On Friday, they heard that a poor man, in a state of insanity, and fully answering Edmond's description, was in

custody of the police at the Marlborough Street police-station. William immediately started of, and found the information was correct. There, in a pitiable state, pale, exhausted, and covered with mud, was Edmond. The police had found him wandering about Regent Street in the night, or rather early morning, and, for his protection, had lodged him in the station. William attempted to get from his brother an account of his actions since he had quitted home on the previous Monday; but the poor fellow's intellects were completely lost, and William could obtain no intelligible answer. After thanking the police authorities, William engaged a cab and took his brother home.

"Pleased as Mrs. Watkins was to see her son, her pleasure was considerably modified on observing the pitiable condition he was in. She was now more perfectly convinced than ever of the necessity of placing him under restraint. Emma, in the mean time, had been sent for their friend the doctor. He kindly volunteered to go immediately to Bethlem Hospital, and try if it were not possible for Edmond to be admitted the next day. In the evening, he returned with the information that he had succeeded, and it was arranged that he and William should accompany Edmond to the hospital at as early an hour as possible the next morning.

"The day came and the doctor was ready at the appointed time, and in less than an hour afterward, Edmond was placed under restraint. At the tea-table that evening, Mrs. Watkins overwhelmed William with questions as to the class of treatment his brother would receive, what description of building it was, what sort of men the doctors appeared to be, and an infinity of others bearing on the same subject, all of which William answered to her perfect satisfaction, and the effect they had on her

mind was evidently most consoling. William, at last, was obliged to leave her, to pay the usual Saturday night expenses, and then to make his accustomed visit to his employer.

"But a few minutes had elapsed since William had left the room before he entered it again. Never, perhaps, in so short a time, had a greater change taken place in any individual. He was now as pale and haggard as if he had seen a spectre; with staring eyes and open mouth, with limbs hardly able to support him, he staggered to a chair, and sank upon it. He then gazed at his terrified mother and cousin with painful anxiety, but was unable to utter a word. In vain Emma and her aunt questioned him, in vain he tried to answer them—he continued utterly speechless. In that state he remained so long, that Emma, now greatly alarmed, threw on her bonnet and shawl, and ran over for their friend the doctor. Her visit was useless; he was from home, but they would send him over as soon as he returned.

"When Emma arrived, she found her cousin somewhat recovered, thanks to a glass of wine which had been given him by his mother. Shortly after he had swallowed it, he gave a deep sigh, and exclaimed, 'My God! what shall I do?'

"Mrs. Watkins, finding him able to speak, again questioned him, and by degrees discovered that, after he had paid the porter, he went to the iron safe and unlocked it, to take, as usual, the cash-box to his employer, when, to his horror, he found that it was gone. How it could have occurred was incomprehensible. Nothing appeared to have been disturbed, and yet it was impossible to have reached it in the corner he had placed it without removing several articles which were accustomed to be placed before it to conceal it. He alone had the key, and it had

never left his possession for a moment. He tried to persuade himself that he must have left it at Camberwell the previous Saturday; but memory soon proved so plainly to him that it was not the fact, and that he himself had placed it in the safe immediately after his return home, that he was forced to seek for some other excuse; but all in vain! no excuse could he find, and he was obliged to return terrified to the sitting-room.

"When his mother had fully understood his statement, she inquired whether there was much money in the cash-box. William was unable to answer the question. He was certain there was a considerable amount in it, but how much he did not know.

"'Whatever the amount may be, William,' said his mother, 'Mr. Nugent must know it sooner or later, and you had better go to him at once, and let him know the worst.'

"'I cannot, mother.'

"'Do, my dear; it only wants a little courage and all will be over; and the sooner it is done the better.'

"William rose for the purpose of leaving, but his courage failed him.

"'Mother,' he said, 'I cannot do it. I cannot face that old man.'

"'But why, my dear? He cannot be so unreasonable as to say it was your fault, after all the care you have taken of his property.'

"'Mother, it will be a thousand times worse than that. He will say I have stolen it!'

"His mother made no verbal answer, but the ordinary mild countenance of the amiable woman was changed in a moment. The usual tranquil expression had vanished, and determination and anger supplied its place. She left the room, and in a few moments returned with her bonnet and shawl in her hand.

"'Tell me, my dear,' she said, as she made her preparations to leave the house, 'whereabout in Camberwell Mr. Nugent lives.'

"'Mother, you cannot go there; let me remain quiet a little longer, and I will go myself, rather than expose you to any annoyance.'

"'No, William, I am resolved to go myself; tell me where he lives.'

"'You shall not go. You will only hear me insulted, and that will make you angry; and things will be worse than they are now, instead of better.'

"'Angry with him!' said Mrs. Watkins, hastily trying her bonnet-strings, and rather thinking aloud than speaking; 'let him say one word against either of my boys' honesty, if he dares!'

"William, after in vain attempting to get her to remain at home, gave her Mr. Nugent's address, but insisted on a promise from her that she would say nothing that would anger the old man. To make this the more certain, he begged Emma to accompany her, and restrain her, should she show any signs of annoyance at the language his employer might probably make use of. Emma readily promised she would do her best, and the two left the house for Camberwell.

"After they had gone, William began to think calmly over the case, still in no possible manner could he find a clue to the mystery. The only way he could think of, was that some expert burglar had picked the lock. He arose, and taking a light went below again to inspect the iron safe, and especially the lock,—not the slightest trace of force could he find. His next idea was to send for the police, but that might give an alarm to the individual who had taken it, and thus prevent its recovery. Twenty other suggestions also passed through his brain, and were each entertained for a moment and then set aside.

At last he determined to remain quietly in the sitting-room till his mother and cousin should return.

"When Mrs. Watkins and Emma left the house they bent their steps towards Gracechurch Street, for the purpose of taking an omnibus. During their walk, Mrs. Watkins spoke incessantly of the gross cruelty Mr. Nugent would show in uttering the slightest suspicion of want of integrity on the part of her son. Emma in vain attempted to moderate her aunt's anger, nor did her argument—that it would be better to wait till the insult was offered, before it was resented—succeed much better. In the omnibus the conversation dropped, but it was easy to see by the working of Mrs. Watkins's countenance what was passing in her mind. As the omnibus did not go within a considerable distance from the house, they had to walk the remainder of the way. As they neared the place a change came over Mrs. Watkins's frame of mind, and a sentiment akin to that of which William complained came over her. Whether Emma perceived it, or whether it was merely the effect of forethought on her part, is uncertain, but she again began to implore her aunt not to give the slightest angry answer to any ungenerous remark Mr. Nugent might utter, as she might be sure William could easily prove his innocence, and then Mr. Nugent's false accusation would be turned against himself; whereas, if still more irritated, he might subject them to annoyance, or at any rate, be longer in retracting the unjust assertion he had uttered.

"By the time they had arrived at the house, Mrs. Watkins had fully entered into her niece's views, and at last, when they were ushered into the old man's presence, not only had her previous resolution vanished, but a sentiment of fear supplied its place, and that so painful she could hardly articulate.

"They found Mr. Nugent in his accustomed easy-chair,

his table before him, and the candles on it. The old man seemed greatly surprised to see them, but motioned to them to be seated. Mrs. Watkins placed herself on a chair opposite to him, and Emma took another near her aunt.

"'Is your son ill, ma'am, that he is not here himself?' inquired the old man, in a querulous tone.

"'He is not ill, sir; but, I am sorry to say, a terrible misfortune has occurred, which made him unwilling to come; so I came in his place.'

"The old man said nothing, but looked at her for further explanation.

"'My son, sir, was on the point of coming here at his proper time, but on going to the iron safe he found the cash-box was gone.'

"The commencement of the last sentence the poor woman articulated clearly enough, the latter part was all but inaudible; Mr. Nugent, however, understood it as clearly as if it had been uttered in a voice of thunder.

"'Then you mean to say,' he exclaimed, his voice trembling from anxiety and rage, 'that it is stolen?'

"'Oh, sir, I hope not; I am sure we shall find it, if we have patience. I have no doubt my son has placed it somewhere, and forgotten it. We have had a great deal of trouble, sir, last week, and it has unsettled us very much.'

"'I think, ma'am, the box had better be found, and that immediately. I am sure your son can find it if he chooses.'

"'I do not understand you, sir.'

"'I mean, ma'am, that your son himself has taken it, and if it is not returned to its place in half-an-hour, he will find himself in the custody of the police.'

"The rising anger which the former part of the sentence caused the poor mother, vanished with the latter.

"Oh, sir,' she exclaimed, 'you do him an injustice; you do indeed. If it is lost, I am sure he could not help it.'

"'Lost, and nearly five hundred pounds in it, and he not help it!' said the old man, pushing his chair back against the wall and ringing the bell violently. 'Take my word for it, ma'am, that excuse won't answer with me: I know better.'

"Here the servant-girl entered the room.

"'Tell your master I want him directly.'

"The girl left the room on her mission, and Mr. Nugent continued:

"'Let us understand each other, ma'am,' he said. 'I have had my suspicions of your own and your son's honesty for some time past, but I could hardly suppose he could prove himself such a barefaced villain as he has.'

"'My son, sir,' said the indignant mother, 'is as honest a man as you are, or as any that lives. You are a wicked wretch to say such a thing.'

"'This is too much,' said Mr. Nugent, as the door opened, and his son-in-law, the banker's clerk, entered. 'Here, Johnson, I have to thank you for this. If it had not been for you, this would not have happened. That villain, Watkins, pretends he has lost my cash-box.'

"'That is very unfortunate, certainly: but, first, let us be certain that it is lost. Shall I go over to the house and assist in finding it?'

"'Yes, do; and, remember, I do not hold you altogether blameless in the matter.'

"'I do not understand you, sir,' said Mr. Johnson, in a highly-offended tone.

"'Yes, sir, you: why did you advise me not to take notice of the letter I received warning me of his conduct?'

"'Because, sir, I would never notice an anonymous accusation; besides, the letter, from its style, appeared to have been written by a drunken man, and it would

not have been fair to a person who has hitherto behaved honorably to suspect him on such evidence.'

"'And yet you see you were wrong.'

"'I am not certain of it yet, nor will I form an opinion till I have gone deeper into the matter.'

"'And let him, I suppose, get away in the mean time.'

"'No, sir,' said the son-in-law, 'I do not mean that at all; between accusing a man of a doubtful crime, and using a proper precaution, there is a great difference. I will immediately, if you authorize me, go to the inspector of police of that division and put the affair in his hands. I shall have no hesitation in acting under his advice.'

"'Well, then, you had better go immediately. My God, what shall I do? I have two bills becoming due next week.'

"'I hope, sir,' said Mrs. Watkins to Mr. Johnson, 'you will do nothing rashly: a more honest young man than my son never lived.'

"'I shall act under the inspector's advice, ma'am: but at the same time let me suggest the propriety of your allowing me to arrive at your house before you, as it would show that you had no collusion with your son when you knew he was going to receive a visit from the police.'

"'Oh, sir, do what you please: but do not mention my son and the police in the same breath: you don't know him,' said the poor woman, bursting into tears.

"'I do not wish to hurt your feelings, but I must do my duty to Mr. Nugent. I think I had better go at once: of course, sir, I have your authority to act according to my judgment.'

"'Certainly, but leave no stone unturned to find the box: for if you do not, cost what it may, I will punish that fellow to the utmost.'

"Mr. Johnson then left the house, and Mrs. Watkins and Emma remained a short time longer attempting in some sort to pacify the old man, but finding they only

received insult in return, they gave up the attempt and left him to himself.

"Slowly and sadly the two sorrowing women wended their way homeward, little conversation passing between them the while. When they arrived they found Mr. Johnson, William, and an inspector of police, in the counting-house. They appeared to have been minutely examining the premises, and the iron safe, without having been able to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. Many were the questions they put to William, all of which he answered in a candid manner. He unhesitatingly admitted that the cash-box had been placed in his custody, that he had locked it up himself on the previous Saturday night, after his visit to Mr. Nugent. That he had had occasion to open the safe once in the course of the week, but that he had carefully locked it after taking from it what he wanted. Of that he was sure. He also admitted the key had remained in his possession the whole week, nor did he remember one single instance in which it would have been possible for another to have had it in his possession, even for a moment, without his knowledge.

"At last the inspector admitted it was impossible for them to pursue the question further that evening. He proposed to Mr. Johnson that a policeman should remain in the house all night. He further informed William that a strict watch would be set on all in the house, and that any one leaving it would be expected to give an account of his actions. To this William could offer no objection; and after a few words in private, Mr. Johnson and the inspector left the premises, having first placed in possession a policeman, who had been waiting outside the house during the search.

"Sad indeed were the family round their supper-table that evening. Had the humble provision before them been the greatest delicacies wealth could produce, they

would have seemed alike, in their mouths, dry and tasteless. Few were the words they spoke, and these, as if by tacit consent, in no way bore upon the terrible event of the evening. Even William did not ask one question of his mother relative to her visit to his employer. Supper over, they still sat silent round their table, the only noise heard in the house being the heavy measured tread of the policeman as he walked to and fro in the warehouse, and trying to beguile the weary hours of the night by humming some common tune. Midnight had struck long before the family thought of retiring. When William was taking leave of his mother, after having kissed her, he remained for a moment with her hand in his, gazing on her face. Suddenly his eyes filled with tears: 'Mother, dear mother!' he exclaimed, 'can you believe me capable of such an act of dishonesty?'

"His mother clasped her arms round his neck. 'William, my dear, I would as soon suspect an angel from heaven—don't cry, my dear,' she said, the tears streaming down her own face the while—'don't cry, God will never allow the innocent to be accused without lending them His aid. It may come now, it may come later, but the proof of your innocence will come in His good time, be assured.'

"William tenderly embraced her, and poor Emma, forgetting her accustomed propriety of demeanor in the presence of her aunt, kissed him, as she bade him good night, scarcely less affectionately than his mother had done before her. Good night! how little with them did the reality answer to the wish! Not one among them closed an eye that night. The policeman in the warehouse, and his fellow in the street commissioned to watch the outside of the house, were to be envied by the inmates in their beds.

"At breakfast the next morning the swollen eyes of

the family told each other plainly, without words, their feelings since they had parted the evening before. Their meal was hardly over when Mr. Johnson arrived with a police inspector and a detective. They examined with the greatest minuteness the whole locality, but the lock of the safe claimed their particular attention. Not a scratch, not a mark on it could they discover, which would lead them to imagine it had been opened by a pick-lock with a false key. The inspector and the detective acknowledged they were for the moment at fault.

"'You must get to-morrow, sir, a search-warrant, and we will examine the whole of the upper part of the house.'

"'There is no occasion for a search-warrant,' said Mrs. Watkins, who had overheard the latter part of the remark, 'you can search now wherever you please.'

"'If you have no objection,' said the inspector, 'we had better do so at once.'

"Mrs. Watkins offered no impediment, and the house was thoroughly searched from the top to the bottom, but without any thing being found which could give the slightest clue to the discovery of the missing cash-box.

"When the search was over, the inspector candidly told William, that although he was not in custody there was still grave suspicion against him, and that a police-man would continue to remain on the premises. William of course could make no objection, and the inspector and detective accompanied by Mr. Johnson, left the house, when, after a short conversation, the latter went to his home to report to Mr. Nugent the result of his visit. Mr. Nugent was furious when he heard the cash-box had not been found, and in spite of the remonstrances of his son-in-law, he insisted that William should be given into custody on the morrow.

"The next day William was arrested. Information of the robbery, with the numbers of the notes, and the

description of the bills of exchange, was sent to the different police stations. Inquiries were made by the police in the neighborhood respecting the ordinary reputation of William, and the family in general, but nothing positive could be heard of to their prejudice. The porter's house had been searched, and he severely questioned, but not the shadow of suspicion could rest on the man. He spoke of William in the highest manner, but admitted he had heard frequent quarrels between the brothers, or rather frequent attacks by Edmond on William, for his love of money, and predicting that if he did not alter his mode of thinking he would certainly end badly. The detective also drew from Emma the episode at the cabinet-maker's in Finsbury square. He called there in the course of the day, and the shopman related clearly enough what had taken place. 'That he understood William, who talked of money as if it were very plentiful with him, was on the point of purchasing the furniture of a house. That after he had left, a person had addressed the porter, who was putting up the warehouse shutters, and advised him to have no transaction with William, as he was only an assistant in a very small house of business, and was very poor, and that either he would not be able to pay for the articles he might buy, or if he did, it would not be with his own money. After finding, on inquiry, that the description of William's position was true, he resolved to get rid of him quietly should he call again; and he kept to his resolution.' The detective inquired if the porter were still on the establishment, but was informed he had left; still, should it be material to find him, the shopman thought he could succeed.

"When William was brought before the magistrate, Mr. Nugent attended as a witness. Ill and decrepit as he was, he could not refrain from the satisfaction of appearing against one who, he imagined, had robbed

him, and who still continued to retain the produce of the theft. As this was a preliminary examination, the minutiæ of the case were not gone into. Mr. Nugent had employed a legal practitioner of standing in criminal matters, and a *prima facie* case was easily made out, and then a remand was asked for. The magistrate granted it, and ordered William to be brought up again in a week. Mrs. Watkins found the doctor had procured for William the services of a solicitor, and that gentleman requested bail might be taken, which was agreed to, and Mrs. Watkins and the doctor immediately offered themselves, and were bound over in the sum of two hundred pounds each.

"The next week to the Watkins family was one of gloom and sorrow. Of course Mrs. Watkins could no longer remain in the house. She was obliged, on removing, to submit to the disagreeable formality of having her goods searched by the policeman on duty. At last nothing more belonging to her remained in the house, which was taken possession of by a person appointed by Mr. Johnson.

"Her new residence consisted of two small unfurnished rooms in Lambeth. She had chosen that locality in consequence of her being totally unknown there. She was induced to adopt this proceeding in consequence of the notoriety the affair had already acquired in the part of the town they had been living in, and which had made William not only the object of unpleasant remarks, but occasionally of great annoyance, for his innocence was far from being as well established in the minds of his neighbors as it was with his mother and cousin. Mrs. Watkins had witnessed this with profound grief. Though to her personally it made no alteration in her respect for her son, or faith in his innocence, while it rather increased

her love, it was impossible for her to witness the conviction of his guilt in the minds of others, without grief for it on the one hand, and terror lest the jury should hold the same opinion on the other. Her sole capable friend and adviser was the doctor, and he, although admirable in his endeavors to calm her mind, and induce reliance in his opinions, was scarcely of use in the more material point, the defence of her son, beyond introducing her to the solicitor, and persuading her to act by his advice.

"If the conviction of her son's innocence was strong in the eyes of the mother, and somewhat doubtful in the sight of the doctor, there was a strong predisposition against it in the mind of the lawyer. He had had great experience in criminal practice, and the frequency of the cases in which he had found that plausible manners and honest appearance had been the stock-in-trade of a rogue, now induced him to look with suspicion on those qualifi cations in every cause he had to defend. The short history he had obtained of William's case was far from obliterating that impression in his mind. The anonymous letter which Mr. Nugent had received, was, in the first place, a terrible obstacle for him to surmount in believing in William's innocence. True, he could demand a sight of that letter if it were intended to be produced in evidence, but he hardly could guess what would be its effect on the jury. Again, there was the mysterious conversation which had taken place between the stranger and the porter at the cabinet-maker's. Added to these were the frequent admonitions of Edmond to his brother in reference to money, and the evidence of Mr. Nugent's porter to the fact. All these, combined with some other collateral circumstances, contributed in the lawyer's mind to make the honesty of his client doubtful, and he feared

the result of the trial, not knowing what further evidence might be brought forward by the prosecution. After much consideration he determined to suggest to Mrs. Watkins the idea of a compromise, and with that intent, sent her a letter requesting her attendance at his office the next morning, without fail, particularly advising her to come alone, from the fear he was under that William, whether innocent or guilty, might induce her to refuse the advice he was about to offer.

"This letter reached Mrs. Watkins in the nick of time, for she was at that moment on the point of leaving the house, to call on Mr. Nugent to ask him to forego his intention of prosecuting her son, and to offer him, as the price of his forbearance, as much of the amount of his loss as it was possible for her to raise, if not indeed the whole, on the condition that he should give her a letter certifying his full belief in William's integrity. True it is that many and apparently insurmountable difficulties presented themselves to her, less from the reality of their existence than her ignorance of the best manner to place her proposition before the irritable old man. To overcome these objections had detained her so long at home, that her solicitor's letter reached her before she had started on her errand.

"The next morning Mrs. Watkins was at her solicitor's office long before the usual hours of business. When they met, and after Mrs. Watkins had been duly inducted into the client's chair, he opened the proceedings with extreme caution, fearing lest the anger of the mother, strong in the faith of her son's innocence, should show itself against any proposition for a compromise, and little knowing how completely her fear of the impending trial had smoothed the way for his arguments.

"He commenced by assuring her of his complete con-

viction of William's innocence of the charge of which he was accused, still a certain amount of sympathy was due to Mr. Nugent, and without impeaching his integrity for one moment, a certain amount of blame to William.

"'Pardon me for a moment, hear me speak first, and then you will be better able to judge of my reasons,' he said, noticing an expression of angry surprise on the face of the mother. 'In the first place, there is no doubt about Mr. Nugent's having lost a considerable sum of money, and without knowing much of his circumstances, probably much more than he could miss without great inconvenience. It is certain this money was committed into your son's custody for security, and that during the time it was in his possession it was lost. Now, without, as I said before, doubting your son's integrity, it is extremely doubtful, looking at it in an equitable point of view, whether he is not indebted to Mr. Nugent for at least a portion of the sum, and if he were able to pay it (which I understand, unfortunately, is not the case, as he has not the means), he ought to do so.'

"'Though he has not the means, sir, I possibly may have them, and to my last shilling I would give it sooner than my son should be placed in the disgraceful position of a prisoner accused of theft, although he is as innocent of it as I am.'

"'With those feelings, ma'am,' said the solicitor, somewhat surprised at the readiness with which she fell into his views, 'I think an arrangement may very easily be arrived at. It is certainly somewhat contrary to law to compromise a felony, still there is occasionally a way of arranging these affairs without exactly bringing on the parties concerned so disagreeable an accusation. I know something of the solicitors for the prosecution. I will

call on them this afternoon, and have a little conversation with them on the subject. Candidly, I think you are right in the view you have taken of the case. No doubt of his innocence would exist in the mind of any reasonable person acquainted with the truth. At the same time, there is a great tendency in human nature to believe the worst in any accusation against our fellow-creatures, and although your son, no doubt, would obtain a verdict of "not guilty," by an unprejudiced jury, still, with those singular facts in the possession of the prosecution, there would always remain a most unpleasant stigma upon him. It should also be borne in mind, that juries are not always unprejudiced; on the contrary, those composed of tradesmen, as they frequently entirely are, are exceedingly disposed to look severely on any accusation of dishonesty in an individual employed by one of their body. At present there has been but little injury done to his character, but, whether returned guilty or not guilty, that will not be the case if he be once brought to trial.'

"With all this Mrs. Watkins readily agreed, and was on the point of rising to take her leave, but there was yet one point which had not yet been touched on by the wary solicitor.

"'But allow me to ask you, Mrs. Watkins, in case they accept a compromise, whether the securities you hold for the money are of a description easily to be turned into cash?'

"'I have my furniture, and my annuity which I purchased in the —— Life office, which I suppose I can sell.'

"'Certainly,' said the lawyer, making a slight grimace, 'but of what annual value may the annuity be? for an office selling an annuity and purchasing one have frequently different tables for each transaction, and I am

afraid, in the office you mention, that difference will be very considerable.'

"'I paid six hundred pounds for the annuity between two and three years since. It cannot be worth much less now.'

"'I am afraid, ma'am, they will be hardly of that opinion, or, in other words, will not very readily admit it; but, at any rate, there will be sufficient to cover the loss. May I ask of you if you have any other securities which may be more easily turned into cash?'

"This question was of course merely asked to discover what other property she was possessed of.

"'I am sorry to say,' said the poor woman, trying to smile, while her eyes filled with tears, 'that you now know all I possess in the world.' The smile vanished, but the tears remained.

"'I am very sorry to hear it,' said the solicitor, with more real feeling than he had yet shown. 'However, I will call upon the solicitors for the prosecution this afternoon, and you had better see me about this time to-morrow, when I will let you know the result. In these kind of transactions the less that appears on paper the better; at the same time, keep up your spirits; I have no doubt all will be arranged.'

"The solicitor, true to his proposal, called on his brother professional engaged in the prosecution, and there, in that gentleman's private office, with closed doors, the matter was discussed. It took but a short time. Mr. Nugent's solicitor knew perfectly well there was nothing on earth his client loved better than money. Angry as he was, that passion would sink into insignificance in his breast when compared with the probability of his being reimbursed. Mrs. Watkins's solicitor also knew his client would part with the last shilling she pos-

sessed rather than her son should run the risk, and certain ignominy, of a public trial. Both solicitors were honest men; for, though they knew that their personal interests would be better served by letting the trial take its course, they determined, instead, on consulting the interests of their clients, and the affair was arranged. Mr. Nugent's solicitor promised to see his client that afternoon, and communicate the result of his interview to the other early the next morning. He kept his word, and before Mrs. Watkins had arrived, an answer had been received from Mr. Nugent accepting the conditions, with the further agreement that, should the whole or any part of the money be recovered through the vigilance of the police, or otherwise, Mrs. Watkins should have the benefit, without further claim or hindrance on the part of Mr. Nugent.

"Although these conditions involved the total ruin of Mrs. Watkins, she accepted them without the slightest hesitation. There remained now only for her solicitor to treat with the life-office for the redemption of the annuity. This very expensive transaction, through the friendly agency of the solicitor of the life-office, was terminated with far less delay than is usual on such occasions. The money was paid over to Mr. Nugent's solicitor, and the affair was concluded; but to such poverty was Mrs. Watkins reduced by it, that her own solicitor, out of a feeling of charity, gave her credit for his costs, which he had already reduced to nearly his expenses out of pocket.

"During the negotiations not one word on the subject had Mrs. Watkins mentioned to her son, knowing perfectly well the opposition he would certainly have raised against the transaction. With Emma it was different. She, on the contrary, was cognizant of every thing

which took place. The change the payment had made in the position of the poor women was sad indeed. They would now both have to work hardly for their scanty daily bread; and as Emma's earnings, in proportion, would be far greater than her aunt's, on her would the onus fall of finding the funds for the principal portion of the housekeeping. William, it was true, would be able to add something considerable as soon as he again got into employment, but that might not be very readily, as he now had no reference, and it would be difficult for him to find another situation.

"It was the evening only before the remand was to be heard that Mrs. Watkins informed her son of the sacrifice she had made. It would be difficult to describe the young man's feelings on the occasion. Although sorry and mortified at the loss of income it would occasion to his parent, the love and gratitude that overwhelmed him at the time allowed the former sentiments to be but little felt. To the assumed calmness of his mother when she made the statement, he replied, first with a look of such perfect love that her firmness immediately showed symptoms of failing, her eyes filled with tears, and then, casting aside all concealment, she embraced her son with such effusion, as fully proved the intense love she bore him. Not a sentiment nor a feeling of her loss was at that moment in the woman's thoughts. All the sorrow she had gone through, all the fearful anxiety the impending trial had caused her, had vanished, and although the tears flowed rapidly from her eyes, there perhaps did not exist at the moment a happier woman. Emma, also, who stood by watching them, had her share of happiness. She drew her own conclusion of the value of the husband such an affectionate son would make, and if, at that moment, the prospect of their union was in long perspec-

tive, the happiness to be reached was well worth the time it would take to obtain it.

"Emma was soon again occupied with her pupils. Mrs. Watkins was hardly so fortunate. The only one she had had in the Italian language now left her to reside in the country, and she could not, for some weeks, obtain another. At last one was found, but, after a little experience, Mrs. Watkins found her so dull, she could make nothing of her. Another presented herself, but after the third lesson, Mrs. Watkins was informed that there was not the slightest probability of obtaining her money. At last one offered who was qualifying herself as a governess, and although the lessons promised to cease after a short time, while they lasted, they procured a most desirable addition to their income. William, in the mean time, supported himself out of his modest savings, and occupied himself all day in attempting to procure another situation.

"Seven months passed over, and, notwithstanding all William's exertions, he had not been able to provide fresh employment, nor did there appear the slightest probability of his obtaining any. Day after day was he occupied in his search, and each evening did he return as little advanced as when he left home in the morning. Several times he had appeared on the point of succeeding, but when it came to the terrible question, 'What are your references?' the prospect was closed to him. Had he only now first arrived in England, his difficulties would have been comparatively trifling to those which continually presented themselves. Often his courage gave way, and he more than once found himself wandering up and down in front of a house of business, whose proprietor, he was aware, wanted an assistant, without the nerve to enter. At last he appeared thor-

oughly down-hearted, and gave up for the moment any further attempt.

"One morning he told his mother and Emma that he wished to have some serious conversation with them. They were naturally most attentive.

"'I have been, for some time past, my dear mother, wishing to break to you and Emma a resolution I have arrived at, but which I have not had till now the courage to tell you. As I find the longer I wait, the more terrible the task becomes, I am now determined to explain all to you. I find it is impossible for me to obtain employment in England. I have not more than forty pounds left of my savings, and though that may last me some time, when it is spent, I shall find myself in no better a position than I am now. I have therefore come to the conclusion to try my fortune in Australia. I know that there any honest, industrious man may succeed. My intention is to try the new settlement of Melbourne, which, if not a very flourishing town, is at least a rising one, and as soon as I have opened a road to gain my own living, I shall write to you and Emma to join me there. You now know my plans. I should not have mentioned them to you, my dear mother, had I not determined to carry them out; and now I have told you all, wish me success, and encourage me in my new undertaking.'

"It is not to be supposed that an unconditional assent was accorded at the first conversation William had with his mother on the subject, but it was soon determined on as their plan for future operations. Mrs. Watkins, though far from young, was still sufficiently so to look upon the journey without dread, and the fact of her having formerly been accustomed to travel, smoothed away many difficulties and prejudices, which might otherwise have appeared as serious impediments. The only dif-

ferent suggestion which Mrs. Watkins offered was touching the possibility of their all leaving England together, but a very little reflection proved to her the expense would present an insuperable obstacle, so she gave way, and it was finally determined that William should act as the pioneer of the party, and leave England as soon as he conveniently could. Edmond's unhappy condition was their only difficulty in the arrangement, yet even that, if not satisfactorily, was at last decided on. He was to remain where he was till it was time for Mrs. Watkins to leave England, and then, if sufficiently recovered to be removed, he was to accompany her; and the hospital authorities were of opinion that a considerable improvement in his malady had already taken place since his residence among them. Should, however, he remain too ill to leave England, they were then to consider what course to pursue. By this faulty reasoning, the probable necessity of their leaving him behind was avoided. The possibility of the poor fellow's ultimate recovery, however, was far from hopeless, and he improved so rapidly, that before William's departure from England, scarce any vestiges of his disease remained, and had it not been for a peculiar expression of countenance which betokened his hallucination, he might have passed without remark in any society whatever. William did not inform him of his intention to leave England. He thought, and with reason, that any shock, however slight, might bring on a relapse, and he therefore left it to his mother, after his departure, to break the circumstance to his brother.

"William now began to make active preparations for the voyage. He engaged a steerage passage in a ship bound for Melbourne. His outfit was of the most modest description, so much so, that out of his little economies

nearly ten pounds remained when he was ready to sail. About this there was some friendly altercation between him and his mother, he wishing to leave it with her as some little compensation for the trouble she had sustained, whilst she, on the contrary, wanted to add something from her own very moderate assets, towards a fund in hand for him when he landed. The affair ended by each keeping the money which belonged to them. Further arrangements had to be entered into. William offered to send regularly half his earnings to England to assist his mother, but this she resolutely declined. She was not in this argument without strong reason to back her. She remarked, that if they were ultimately to join him in Australia, it would be necessary for him to have some home to receive them in, and the more money he forwarded to England, the longer would be the time before they met. He had better, she said, reserve and employ his earnings in the colony. She had no doubt that God would bless her own and Emma's exertions, and she had no fear of their being able to maintain themselves in respectability and comfort till he should be able to receive them, and then the sale of their remaining furniture would suffice to pay their passage-money, or, if not, and Edmond should be able to accompany them, they could easily write to Melbourne for assistance.

"The day at last arrived for his departure. We will draw a veil over their leave-taking. Suffice it to say, it was such as might be expected, when a mother loses, perhaps for years, her eldest and much-loved son; when a loving girl takes leave of a lover whom she adores, and who quits her to acquire the sufficient and honorable means of maintaining her."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MEMORY IN MADNESS—CONTINUED.

"We will first accompany William on his travels. The ship in which he had taken his passage was a fine-built clipper, which had been for several years in the Australian trade, and was celebrated, in advertisement phraseology, for making her voyages with regularity and dispatch. She carried of course an experienced surgeon, who was, like many others in those days, a worthless, drunken fellow, who drowned in rum the feelings of contempt he was held in by all on board, whose characters were not as totally lost as his own. The ship was crowded, and perhaps a more motley collection of mortals had never been collected together. Among the chief cabin passengers were several of undoubted respectability. Married men and their families, leaving England to invest in sheep-farming or trade a small capital that might realize a good return, but which in England was too trifling to yield more, with incessant anxiety, than the common necessaries of life. Two or three merchants who had visited England on business, and were now returning to Australia. Two were solicitors, bound on obtaining, if possible, in a young and flourishing colony, a footing, which after years of honorable endeavor they had failed to obtain in England. To these were added more than one officer in the army, who had sold their half-pay for a trifle, and had, with their wives and families, determined, without any definite plan, to rise to opulence in another quarter of the globe.

"But if the inhabitants of the chief cabin were of a mixed description, those in the steerage offered to the observer a far more singular combination. Broken-down farmers without a shilling more than was sufficient to pay for their passage, expecting the earth in Australia to provide them with crops, without their possessing even the money to purchase seed. Idle young men, who would not work in England, whose friends, tired of their worthlessness, had paid for them a steerage passage, and had then thanked God they were rid of them at last; and by broken-down tradesmen, with characters too bad to obtain credit for even the stock of a chandler's shop at home. More than one individual was there, who watched with anxiety, before the ship left England, every stranger who came on board, and who was seen talking to the officers. Others whose countenances told at first glance the confirmed drunkard. Others, young men, though poor, were so respectable in appearance, that they carried about them a certificate for ability and integrity. Broken-down horse-chaunters, second-rate musicians; in fact, every class of character, from the highest respectability, like William's, to the lowest vagabond who possessed means of paying the passage, were huddled together.

"The female society in the steerage was as mixed as that of the men. The modest-looking young girl, the brazen profligate with a sanctimonious varnish on her face, fresh from some east-end workhouse, whither she had been sent, after working out her punishment as a 'drunk and disorderly,' to be reformed by the chaplain, and who was now on her passage to the colony as a respectable female servant. The poor pale-faced, half-taught governess; the old woman with hardly a year's life in her, going out to join a son who had done well

since he had left England; young wives, evidently soon expecting to be mothers, certainly before the end of the voyage, and whose babies, when born, would as certainly die before the ship would reach land; and young girls of thirteen or fourteen, all mixed up without distinction, old and young, sickly and healthy, virtuous or worthless, there to seethe together for the next four months, without any possibility of separation, the bad certainly contaminating the good, but the good utterly inert on the bad.

"A few weeks after the ship left England, the character of each passenger was perfectly well known to the rest, and acquaintances and friends were made, according to the several tastes of the individuals. William fortunately was in a berth with three other young men of respectable character; and his time passed, all circumstances considered, tolerably agreeably. One acquaintance he had made among the chief cabin passengers, which afterwards greatly influenced his career in the colony. Mr. Fortescue was the younger son of a wealthy and aristocratic English family. In his youth he had been wild and very extravagant, so much so, that his father, after paying his debts more than once, finally cast him off, and died without leaving him a shilling. He was well educated and accomplished, had travelled much in Europe, and was an excellent Italian scholar. It was possibly due to this circumstance that the intimacy, or rather acquaintanceship, sprung up between him and William. Ten years before, Mr. Fortescue had left England for Australia almost penniless, but a run of good fortune had there befallen him, and he was now a man of considerable property. He had a fine sheep-walk about fifty miles from Melbourne, and besides that, he conducted a business as a merchant or storekeeper. He

had just been on a visit to England, having left his sheep-walk to the care of his shepherds, who were again superintended by a large landholder in the neighborhood, and his store, in the mean time, had been managed by an assistant, in whose integrity, however, he had imperfect faith.

"After he had obtained a better knowledge of William, he made him an offer to place him in his store, if he could find no other employment, or, at any rate, he could remain there till something better presented itself. William, who had neither friend nor acquaintance in the colony, readily accepted the proposition, and it happily turned out for him a most beneficial arrangement.

"Nothing particularly worthy of notice occurred during the voyage. The ship, as usual, made a rapid passage, and, with the exception of four deaths—three children and one old woman—they all arrived safely in Melbourne, and William and his new friend, after a few days' rest in that town, started off for the sheep-walk.

"When Mr. Fortescue arrived at his store, he found much to displease him; in fact, all his suspicions of want of integrity in his assistant proved to have been well founded. Not only had the accounts been kept in a most irregular manner, but it was apparent that the confusion they showed was rather the effect of purpose than carelessness or ignorance. They were evidently intended, by their inexplicable state, to conceal defalcations to a considerable amount. After a hurried visit to his sheep-walk, which, on the contrary, was in perfect order and most flourishing condition, he commenced with William a complete audit of the accounts of the store. The assistant did not wait for the inspection to be finished, but went off without notice the second night after it commenced. He had in vain endeavored to clear

up two or three transactions, through which dishonesty appeared in a most glaring manner; and, dreading the effect of Mr. Fortescue's anger when he should discover the greater defalcations which were to follow, he prudently decamped, and with such success, that, in spite of all his employer's efforts, he was never afterwards found. Mr. Fortescue, highly pleased with William's business capabilities, as shown in the investigation which had been gone through, installed him with a salary of one hundred pounds a year in the situation the late assistant had so unworthily filled.

"William now wrote a long letter to his mother, and a longer to Emma, giving them the particulars of his voyage, his good fortune in finding immediate occupation under so good an employer, and his hopes that, in proportion as he made himself useful, his salary would be increased; if not, he had no doubt, after having saved as much as his first year's salary, he should be able to open a store of his own, and then he should look forward to their again happily meeting. More than this he said in his letter to Emma, which would now be a useless waste of time to dwell upon.

"Things continued to prosper with William. He became known to many of the owners of property for miles around, and his amiable manners and business qualities gained him the good will of all who made his acquaintance. Seven months after he had dispatched his letters to England, he received the answers. His mother's letter only shall be quoted. 'In it she informed him that since his departure but little had occurred worthy of especial notice, and that little was of an ordinary character. Her health and that of Emma had been good. The latter had several pupils, who, if not in such affluent circumstances as to pay her a remunerative price for her

lessons, contributed sufficient for their comfortable maintenance, and they could now continue in their present lodgings till they heard from him again. The only piece of news which was really interesting, was the great improvement which had taken place in Edmond's disorder. So great had it been that, in case it continued to improve for the next six months in the manner it had done the last, he would be able to join them in their passage out. Mrs. Watkins dwelt strongly on this part of her letter, as the possibility of being obliged to leave Edmond in England was the only drawback to her wish to join her beloved son in Australia. The letter concluded that they hoped soon to receive notice for them to leave England, but that he was not to think of sending them over the necessary funds till he could do so with comfort to himself, and without detriment to his prospects in the colony.'

"William, when he received the letter, was doubting in his own mind whether it would not be better to speak to his employer either for an increase of salary, or to inform him it would be necessary to leave him, at the same time stating that he should not do so till Mr. Fortescue had, to his satisfaction, found some one to supply his place. His mother's letter determined him on the point, and he only waited till Mr. Fortescue should return from his sheep-walk, where he had latterly been residing, to put his determination into execution. At last that gentleman arrived, but William's heart failed him the moment he wished to put his resolve into execution. He reflected on the kindness and consideration that gentleman had shown him, and it seemed almost like an act of ingratitude on his part to leave him, now that he had found his services valuable. Fortunately, Mr. Fortescue himself smoothed away the difficulty.

On examining the books and the transactions which had taken place during his absence, he one morning addressed William as follows:

"'I have, since I saw you, Watkins, added greatly to my sheep-walk, and it will now require so much of my time, I shall have little to give to the store. I would offer it to you, if you had the capital to purchase it; but if it will meet your views, I will propose that we enter into partnership in the concern, and on such terms that we each have an equal interest in it. The business has certainly increased greatly since it has been under your management. Every one who has met you is pleased with you, and if you continue in the same manner, it will put some hundreds a year into the pockets of us both. I think the offer a fair one. I will find capital and you labor, and as our separate departments will not clash, I think we shall be able to go on well together. Now, give me an answer—yes or no.'

"It may easily be imagined which answer William gave. He saw every prospect of the bargain being a most lucrative one, and he readily accepted it. The articles of partnership were drawn up by a solicitor resident in the place, and William then wrote over the joyful intelligence to his mother, concluding with the hope that the next letter she would receive from him, after her answer to his present communication, would contain instructions for her leaving England.

"But another change had taken place in William's prospects before he received his mother's answer to his letter. His partner, Mr. Fortescue, in consequence of over-exertion in arranging the affairs of his new purchase, as well as exposure to wet, was seized with fever, which, though slight at first, soon betrayed features of a most severe form, probably from the little care he had

taken of himself at the commencement. He lingered on for some time, when the fever abated, but so distressing was the weakness it left, and so utterly inoperative were the remedies used to restore his strength, that even he, with all the easy faith of a man wishing to live, could not shut his eyes to the probable termination of his malady. He, however, was a strong-minded man, and determined, if necessary, to meet death with calmness and fortitude. He sent for the same solicitor who had drawn up the articles of partnership, and collectedly made his will. Afterwards, his malady increasing, he quietly resigned himself to his fate. A clergyman, who resided in the neighborhood, frequently visited him to administer the solace of religion, and in William he found a confidential friend and sympathizing companion. Three months after his first attack, Mr. Fortescue expired, and a new era was opened to William.

"Immediately after the funeral, Mr. Fortescue's will was read. He had appointed his solicitor and William as his executors. To his solicitor, with whom he had been acquainted many years, he left five hundred pounds. To William he not only left his interest in the store, but a small house with six or seven acres of garden attached to it, in the immediate outskirts of Melbourne. The latter legacy was but of little value, the house, or hut, was in a most dilapidated condition, and the land was poor and unproductive. It had been inhabited by a gardener before it came into Mr. Fortescue's possession, but the man, finding the enterprise did not pay, gave it up, and Mr. Fortescue had never been able to procure another tenant for it. His sheep-runs and sheep he had ordered to be sold, and after a mortgage, held by an insurance company in Sydney, had been paid off, he left the surplus to his only relative, an old aunt residing in Ireland.

"The executors had to meet frequently to determine on the course to be pursued in winding up the affairs, for several difficulties presented themselves. The solicitor was an excellent man of business, as well as being honorable and skilful in his profession. He had, in common with his late friend, Mr. Fortescue, a high opinion of William's good qualities. He found he was a young man of great capability and activity, and as the solicitor was a married man with a large family, and of somewhat delicate constitution, the active portion of the executorship, which necessitated a voyage to Sydney as well as to England, he proposed leaving in William's hands. If, in one way, this suited William's views, in another, that of leaving his business, which was daily becoming more valuable, offered, at first sight, an insuperable impediment. But even this difficulty met with a solution. As the solicitor not only wanted to invest his legacy, but some economies he had made beside, he proposed to William to purchase Mr. Fortescue's portion of the business. The offer agreed so well with William's views, that the preliminaries were immediately entered into, and the whole affair rapidly arranged. The solicitor was to pay William for half the book-debts, which amounted to about £1,400, and as much more as would make the sum up to £1,000. Of course, William's travelling expenses both to Sydney and England, were to be paid out of Mr. Fortescue's estate, as well as all other disbursements incidental to the trust. All was speedily arranged. With little difficulty, William's partner found a purchaser for the sheep-walk and farm. The whole realized about £24,000, out of which £7,000 had to be placed to the redemption of the mortgage, and the remainder was remitted to England, whither William was to go, as soon as

the payment of the mortgage money was completed in Sydney.

"When William left Melbourne, the next mail was expected from England in about a fortnight. As his letters from his mother were to be directed to the post-office, he doubted for some time whether he would have them forwarded to Sydney. At last, he concluded that, as his business in New South Wales might very soon be terminated, and if he ordered them to be sent after him, they might cross in his way back to Melbourne, he decided to leave them till his return. William's voyage to Sydney was favorable enough, but he had not sufficiently calculated on the law's delay when he had promised himself a speedy return. For several weeks was he, day by day, expecting the end, but when the morrow came he found the case again postponed. At last, after an absence from home of two months, every thing was completely finished, and he returned to Melbourne.

"He found, at the post-office, letters from his mother and Emma. The principal news they contained was that Edmond had completely recovered; he had left the hospital, and was residing with them; that Emma, at the moment of their writing, was too unwell, from cold on the chest, to continue her lessons, and that this, with the extra expenditure occasioned by Edmond's residence with them, had caused a most prejudicial effect on their finances, still they had enough left to last them till the arrival of his next letter, when they should all leave England for Australia. She also informed him they still remained at the same lodging, where they were most kindly treated, and where they had been fortunate enough to secure a bedroom for Edmond.

"The first act of William, after reading his mother's letter, was to place in the hands of his banker the sum

of fifty pounds to her credit. He then secured his passage on board a ship which was to start for England in a week or ten days at the latest. He afterwards wrote to his mother, advising her of the remittance, and informing her, that in less than a month after she had received it he would be with her once more in England, and that they should return to Australia together. He then visited his partner to give an account of his proceedings. These being satisfactorily arranged, he took his leave and returned to Melbourne, and, after a few days' delay, he started on his voyage to England.

"For the first three weeks all went on prosperously on board the ship, but on the fourth, a terrible change for the worse took place. During a fearful gale the main-mast was one night carried away. The gale continued for several days, and when it subsided, the ship was so complete a wreck, that it was impossible for her to continue her journey to England, so the captain steered for Pernambuco, where she arrived in safety. Here, after a detention of six weeks, they again put to sea, but as the repairs to the main-mast had not been made in a very efficient manner, and, as the captain was afraid of carrying much sail, the journey was particularly tedious. However, the longest day must have an end, and William's voyage at last terminated. Six months after he had left Melbourne he arrived in London.

"Of course, William's first care on landing was to visit his mother. He hurried with palpitating heart to the address in Lambeth, and knocked at the door. It was opened by a respectable-looking woman, a total stranger to him. He was on the point of rushing up stairs, but he restrained himself, and he asked if Mrs. Watkins was at home.

"'Nobody of that name lives here,' was the reply.

"'Not here? This is No. 7, is it not?'

"'Certainly it is.'

"'How long has she left?' he inquired.

"'I do not know at all. Nobody of that name has lived in the house since I have been in it.'

"'How long have you lived here?'

"'About six months.'

"'Do you know where I can find the person who lived here before you?'

"'No, I do not. She has left the neighborhood I have heard.'

"'At that moment a neighbor passed.

"'Mrs. Jones,' the woman continued, 'who was it lived here before I came? I mean, who kept the house?'

'Mrs. Owen.'

"'Do you know where she has gone to?' inquired William.

"'No, I do not, poor woman; but, wherever it is, she is in a workhouse I have heard.'

'Do you know,' said William, 'where I can find a lodger who lived with her, a Mrs. Watkins?'

"'No, I do not; but if I did, I am afraid she would not much like it should be known.'

"'Why not?'

"'Because her circumstances can't be much better than those of Mrs. Owen, and as she was very respectable, I am afraid she would not like any one to find her out.'

"'Good God! you don't say so. Pray, tell me, if you can, where I can hear of her. I am her son, and I have just arrived in England. I have not seen her for more than two years.

"'Come in, Mrs. Jones,' said the woman of the house and perhaps you may be able to tell the gentleman some-

thing which may lead him to find out where his mother lives.'

"Mrs. Jones complied, and they all three went into the little parlor.

"'I am sure I do not know what I can tell you, sir, that will be of any use.'

"'But pray,' said William, 'tell me what made her leave this house?'

"'Well, poor woman, she was infamously treated to be sure. The landlady got behindhand in her rent, and her landlord sent in an execution on her goods. Mrs. Watkins, when she heard of it, hired a cart to take away her furniture, but the broker would not let it go, saying, it also was answerable for the rent. Well, Mrs. Watkins tried to prove that, as she did not owe the money, her goods ought not to be taken, but the broker's man would have them. While they were disputing about the matter, the poor young fellow who had not been right in his head came in, as well as the niece, the poor girl that's in a consumption, and they tried to persuade the man to let the things go, but it was of no use. Their goods were seized and sold, and my heart bled for them, if it was only for that young girl, ill as she was, to be driven from house and home without a place to go to. Where they are now I can't tell you, and what's more, I don't know anybody about here that can.'

"This recital had such an effect on William, that he cried like a child. The women, in kind homely language tried to console him, and so far succeeded, as to show him the necessity of immediate action. By an effort, he partially recovered himself. He begged of them to make inquiries of their friends if they could find any one acquainted with his mother, and also informed them he would cheerfully repay any trouble they might take.

They willingly offered to use their best endeavors, and after promising to call on them the next day, he left the house.

"When in the street, he began to consider some settled plan of action, but to bring his mind to think steadily on one point was impossible. After wandering about for some time, he determined to call on the doctor, who had befriended them so much, but he found he had given up practice and had retired into the country. He then, without much hope of success, called at Mr. Nugent's house of business, but he found it now occupied by a tenant who carried on a totally different business, and who knew nothing about William's family. He called at the banker's and found that the remittance he had forwarded to his mother still remained untouched; and lastly, he visited the solicitor who had defended him, but all the intelligence he could give was, that all costs had been most punctually paid by Mrs. Watkins, and that since that time, he had totally lost sight of her. Utterly depressed by these continual disappointments, William at last returned nearly broken-hearted to his hotel."

CHAPTER XIX.

MEMORY IN MADNESS—CONTINUED.

"We must now return to Mrs. Watkins and her troubles. For some time after William's departure, things went on smoothly enough. Emma continued to keep her pupils in the neighborhood of Finsbury Square. Mrs. Watkins unfortunately had no pupils, notwithstanding all her efforts to obtain them! At last she applied herself to the sole occupation open to respectable women in misfortune—needlework. Being tolerably expert as a seamstress she had but little difficulty in finding work; but, oh, how small was the remuneration she received for it! Still it assisted Emma, and they contrived to live happily and comfortably together, looking forward with delight to the time when they should join William in Australia. Nor were they without some happiness in the interim, especially Mrs. Watkins. In her frequent visits to Edmond in Bethlem, she noticed each time a considerable improvement, and the report of the medical authorities confirmed her in the opinion she had formed. At the end of his first year's sojourn, Mrs. Watkins was informed, that if he continued to improve in the same manner during the next three months he would be considered sufficiently recovered to leave the establishment.

"This information, pleasing enough in itself to the devoted mother, was at the same time a source of great

anxiety. True it was, she had yet some few pounds left of her former money, as well as the modest furniture of her apartment, but still that would not last long, should any thing occur to deprive her or Emma of the means of obtaining a livelihood. Certainly she could always calculate on enough to last them for six months, so in case of need, she would have time to communicate with William in Melbourne, and receive his answer before all was expended. To this, however, she had a great aversion, partly from a foolish sentiment, that it was the parent's duty to maintain the child, and the active, energetic young man in Australia, was still to her the same beautiful creature that twenty years before, in Italy, stood by her knee and overwhelmed her with childish questions, as to the manner God lighted up the stars, one by one, and how many angels He had to help Him. Again, with more worldly wisdom, she argued that the more money he had with him in the colony, the greater would be his facilities to increase the amount, and the sooner they would meet again.

"The day arrived for Edmond to return home, and great indeed was his joy to find himself once more at liberty. His mother had been fortunate enough to engage for him a room in the house she lived in; for though Edmond was apparently cured, she had received instructions from the physician of the hospital to watch him carefully, and not to allow any thing to startle or excite him. This advice, it need hardly be said, was fully acted upon, both by his mother and Emma, and every attention in their power was given to the poor fellow. He, however, appeared not to require it. In his manner there was nothing to indicate the calamity under which he had been suffering, and at last his mother even began to entertain hopes he might be able to meet

with some light employment, which would enable him to assist them in their finances. This, however, appeared impossible to obtain, and Edmond remained on their hands a heavy expense, without other hope of return than the pleasure the two kind-hearted women had in assisting him.

"Some months passed without any thing particularly worthy of notice occurring; at last a terrible calamity befell them. Emma was seized with inflammation of the lungs, which threw her for some time on a bed of sickness, and when it subsided it left a weakness so distressing, as to occasion very alarming fears in the mind of her aunt, that consumption would be brought on by it. More than once Emma failed in commencing again her lessons. Terribly was this misfortune felt by them all. Not only the alarm it occasioned to Mrs. Watkins and Edmond, but as Emma was the principal bread-finder of the establishment, her illness was a frightful pecuniary loss to them as well. Still they struggled on, till circumstances became so bad, that Mrs. Watkins determined on writing to William, and begging him either to send them the means of joining him, or if that should not be possible, at least something to assist them in England.

"The letter had been dispatched more than a month, and they were beginning to calculate when William would receive it; when a second shock, less terrible, it is true, than Emma's illness, but enough to cause them great anxiety, befell them. This was the distress levied on the goods of the house for rent due by the landlady. In vain did Mrs. Watkins plead that she had regularly paid her rent, which assertion she substantiated by producing the receipts; the law was imperative. The landlady owed the money, and the law, certainly not justice, gave her creditor the right to seize Mrs. Watkins's

goods in part payment of the amount. There was, however, no help for it, and the unfortunate family meekly bowed their heads to the infliction and sought another lodging.

"Their new abode was poverty-stricken indeed. By the good offices of the broker's man they had contrived to save some bedding, three chairs, and some crockery, as well as a few common articles of furniture, for their kitchen, and these they placed in two small rooms in a by-street in Bethnal Green. A considerable portion of the few pounds the poor women had left, went to purchase the remaining furniture they needed.

"To their great sorrow, Emma's illness returned in consequence of a cold caught while moving. The excitement caused by their misfortune had also a most prejudicial effect on Edmond, and for some time his mother was in great fear of a relapse; as it was, his mind was considerably worse than when he left the hospital. His manner of talking was frequently almost incoherent; and, although, after they had been a week in their new lodging, no increase of the disease was visible, still he required constant attention. Three months had elapsed since they had dispatched their letter to William, and fully three months remained before they possibly could obtain an answer. How to make their scanty means last till that time was for poor Mrs. Watkins a fearful problem to solve. Economy, such as only a respectable Bethnal Green needlewoman can practise, and among them a shilling will cover an amount of the necessaries of life that would astonish a denizen of the West End, would not meet the occasion. True, she had work at waistcoat making, at which she, by working eighteen hours a day, with a little assistance from Emma, could earn nine shillings a week; but three

shillings of this had to be paid for their lodging, leaving but six shillings for the maintenance of the three. Scarcity of food soon began to mark its effects on the countenances of the family, and the hollow cheeks of her niece and son seemed a continual remonstrance to the poor widow to divine some means of increasing their means of existence.

"One evening after her visit to the outfitters for whom she worked, Mrs. Watkins returned home evidently in great mental distress. Edmond noticed it and asked his mother the cause, but could get no reply, and Emma in her turn was equally unsuccessful. In fact, shame as well as sorrow combined to cause the poor woman's emotion, and she wanted to conceal it from others. She had that afternoon applied to the parish officers for relief, an act in itself terribly painful to a respectable woman, and to add to her annoyance she had been refused.

"If, she was told, she would come into the house and pick oakum, she would be sheltered and fed till her proper settlement could be discovered; but they would allow her no out-door relief. She was also given to understand, that if she came in she would be separated both from Edmond and Emma. From the former immediately, and from the latter as soon as her own parish would be determined on. This, of course, had the effect the parish officials intended, to drive her away, and the poor woman left them distressed and degraded.

"Edmond, although denied any information by his mother, evidently understood there was something wrong, and apparently he concluded that pecuniary distress was the cause. Unable to assist her, and helpless himself, he wandered about with a half-idiotic

expression of countenance. Occasionally, however, he would get into fits of violent excitement, and frequently the police had to conduct him home in consequence of his eccentric conduct in the streets. So bad at last did his malady become that there remained but one alternative for Mrs. Watkins, and that was to get him again admitted into Bethlem Hospital; but this required some little time to accomplish. This again was a loss to her. She had more than one visit to make to the hospital before all the formalities were filled up, and the time she was thus occupied had to be made up by increased diligence at her needle. In the mean time Edmond's malady increased so rapidly, his mother was obliged to deliberate whether she had not better ask for the assistance of the parochial authorities, when Edmond took a step which relieved her from the necessity, while it increased her anxiety.

"One evening, while waiting his return, they had delayed their tea to so late an hour, that they determined to postpone it till supper-time. Supper-time came, but Edmond did not make his appearance. No matter—the patient woman and the sick girl still watched, worked, and waited. The night passed, but Edmond had not returned.

"Early the next morning Mrs. Watkins went to the police-station and requested to see the inspector. She informed him of Edmond's disappearance, her anxiety on his account, and the poverty of her circumstances which precluded the possibility of her offering a reward. She was listened to with attention and sympathy, and was then asked for a description of her son's person, which was minutely taken down. The inspector then promised her that information of her son's absence from home should immediately be forwarded to all the police

stations in the metropolis, and as soon as any news should be received of him, he would send a messenger with it to her house.

"Though without stirring from their room, little work was done by either Mrs. Watkins or Emma that day; there they sat motionless, with needles in their hands, and their work before them, as if intent on the labor they had to perform. The night came on, and Mrs. Watkins again visited the police station, but no news of Edmond had been received. The next day passed over with a similar want of success. The third morning Mrs. Watkins took some work home to the outfitters. It was examined in its turn, but a different criticism was passed on it to what she had been hitherto accustomed to hear.

"'It was very badly, very carelessly done,' the foreman said. 'He hoped it would never occur again. In the interest of his employers, he must deduct something from the amount due to her. He should deduct two shillings.'

"The poor woman, with tears in her eyes, begged for mercy. 'She had been so unfortunate with her poor boy. Her mind had been running upon him during the time she was at work, and that was, without doubt, the reason of its faults.' 'I can't help that,' said the foreman, 'I must look to my employer's interests. I should not be doing my duty to him if I did not stop the money. I am very sorry for it, but there is no use talking any more about it. However, I'll give you an extra number of shirts to bring home next Friday, and so if you work hard and well by that time, you will be able to make up the loss.'

"Finding there was no use in pleading poverty to the man, she took up the new work he had offered, and left

the house. On her road she called at the police station, but they had received no intelligence of Edmond.

"When Mrs. Watkins arrived at home, she found Emma too ill to assist her in her work; indeed, the poor girl fell off in strength daily. The parish surgeon attended her, and as far as skilful advice and kindness went, nothing better could be desired; but as his remuneration from the parochial authorities averaged something under sixpence for each case, finding his own medicines, the food and medical comforts necessary for her complaint were far below its requirements.

"Mrs. Watkins, however, resolutely worked on. By this time her arms and fingers had got so accustomed to the mechanical movement that she appeared to continue it when more than half-asleep. Night succeeded day, and day succeeded night; still, with the exception of a few hours' rest, a very short time for their scanty meals, and a few minutes daily spent in purchasing their necessary articles of consumption, or thread, in the same spot, on the same chair, did the poor woman continue her monotonous work. Occasionally Emma rose from her bed to assist her, but with little effect; in a short time she was again obliged to desist, as the act of bending over the needle brought on a most distressing cough.

"Wednesday came and their exchequer was exhausted. It was now necessary to raise money by the same means they had lately been frequently obliged to resort to. Piece by piece their wardrobe had found its way to the pawnbroker's, and now it required some consultation to know on what article of dress the means for their breakfast could be raised. At last, Mrs. Watkins determined on obtaining it by pledging her shoes, a very common mode of raising money by Bethnal Green needlewomen. In a few minutes she returned home, bringing with her

as much bread as would last them for the next two days.

"Wednesday and Thursday passed over without any thing worthy of remark. On Thursday evening Mrs. Watkins unfolded the linen which had yet to be made up before the next morning. As she noticed the quantity yet unfinished, a sigh almost of despair escaped her. Emma noticed it, and determined, at whatever cost to herself, to assist her aunt. Silently she rose from the bed, and having thrown a few garments around her, she seated herself on the chair opposite Mrs. Watkins, and commenced threading her needle. Her aunt attempted to remonstrate, but, on glancing at the girl's countenance, she found there so much determination of purpose that she desisted.

"Darkness came on, and their dim candle was lighted. Both drew their chairs within its rays, and silently and sadly continued their task. Midnight tolled, and its iron tongue spoke without remark or attention by either. On, on they worked, the dead silence of the night being only broken by the sharp sound of the thread as it passed through the linen they were employed on. If strength failed either, a cup of water, the only food they possessed, was on the table beside them, and they drank from it. The gray light of dawn was apparent in the east, dimming their now almost exhausted candle—still they worked on. Footsteps became more and more frequent, till at last the streets were busy with traffic, while the inhabitants of the West-end were still in their beds,—still no cessation from their labor. Broad day appeared, and the bright sun shone in upon them, lighting up their misery to the utmost—still they worked on. Eight, nine, then ten o'clock struck, when Mrs. Watkins, with a sigh of relief, rose from her chair, and threw the work on the

table—it was finished. Emma sat still, her arms hanging listlessly by her side, utterly exhausted.

"After standing erect for a moment to recover herself, Mrs. Watkins said, 'Now go to bed, Emma, my dear, and don't move till I return. I shall not be gone more than half-an-hour. They can, fortunately, find no fault with this,' she continued, taking up the work from the table, and casting her eye over it. 'As soon as I return I will make the breakfast, and we can then have a little rest. Now do lie down, dear; you ought not to be up a moment longer.'

"Emma attempted to obey her, but she fell back in her chair, too fatigued to move. Mrs. Watkins hastened to her assistance, and in a few moments Emma was again in bed. Mrs. Watkins then folded up her work hastily, and was putting on her bonnet and shawl to leave the room, when the door opened, and a policeman entered.

"'We have had intelligence of your son, ma'am,' he said, with a mysterious expression of countenance.

"'Where is he?' said Mrs. Watkins, noticing something was wrong; 'not ill, I hope?'

"'I'm sorry to say he's in trouble. Illegal possession, if not robbery, I understand.'

"'Good God! you astonish me. Why, poor fellow, in his state of mind, he does not know right from wrong.'

"'Well, I don't know much about it myself,' said the policeman, 'but he's in custody at the Marylebone police-court on suspicion. He has with him a large sum of money, but will not say how he got it. They say he's shamming mad. If I were you, I'd go there at once. If you make haste you'll be there before the case is brought on.'

"The poor woman, terrified as she was, hardly knew what to do. She wished to go to her son, but Emma

was evidently fainting from want of food. The poor girl decided her aunt. 'Go at once,' she said; 'never mind me. I can wait till you come back.'

"Mrs. Watkins having thanked the policeman for his information, started off on her long walk to the police-court. Faint from hunger, and soon foot-sore from being shoeless, anxious and broken-hearted, she still continued on, and at last arrived at her destination. She found the case had not yet been called, but it was expected to be heard in a few minutes. She inquired if she might be allowed to see her son. The jailer led her into the yard, and Edmond was brought to her. The poor fellow was in a deplorable condition, dirty, slovenly, and evidently unwell, without the slightest spark of intelligence in his countenance. Even the sight of his mother hardly excited a look of recognition. She kissed him affectionately, and placing her arms round his neck, wept bitterly. The poor maniac looked surprised, and attempted to force his shattered intellect to understand the circumstance, but the effort was useless. The momentary half-glance of intelligence vanished, and he remained utterly unconscious of her caresses.

"The case was called on, and Mrs. Watkins followed her son into court. The jailer placed him in the dock, and his mother sat beside him. The magistrate raised for a moment his head from some warrants he was signing, and fixed his gaze steadily and with a look of surprise on Edmond. Helpless insanity was so apparent in the poor fellow's countenance that the magistrate inquired, with some surprise, what he was charged with.

"'Suspicion of robbery, your worship. He had in his possession a large sum of money, of which he will give no account.'

"'Give no account,' said the magistrate, in a tone of

surprise, 'why, the man is evidently insane. Who has charge of the case?'

"A policeman pushed through the crowd, and placed himself in the witness-box. He placed his hat on the ground, and quickly made proper arrangements for his examination. Edmond took no notice of him, but gazed vacantly round the court. Presently he looked down on his mother, whose hand was before her eyes to conceal her tears, as if to ask for an explanation, but the transient look of intelligence in a moment vanished.

"'Take the book in your right hand. The evidence you shall give to the court shall be the truth, the whole truth'——

"The usher was interrupted in his administration of the oath to the policeman by a violent scream from Mrs. Watkins. Previous to his taking the book from the usher, the policeman had placed on the small ledge before him the property he had taken from the prisoner. The words of the oath had recalled the attention of Mrs. Watkins to what was passing around her. She dropped her hand from her face, and raising her eyes to the policeman, saw placed before him the cash-box lost by Mr. Nugent, and which she had frequently seen in William's possession. The poor woman immediately afterwards fainted, and was carried out of court.

"The proceedings, which were for the moment interrupted, then went on. The policeman stated that about six o'clock that morning, when he was on duty at Hampstead Heath, he noticed the prisoner at the foot of a tree. Nothing beyond that occurred to exite his attention, and he continued on his beat. About an hour afterwards, he noticed the prisoner near one of the ponds, violently striking something with a large stone. On going nearer to him, he found the cash-box produced was the object

being struck. Finding the box contained a large sum of money, he took the prisoner into custody. Afterwards he returned, and examined the ground round the tree. Near the root he discovered a hole that had lately been opened. At the bottom was a mark exactly the size of the cash-box, and he believed that either the prisoner had taken it from the hole, or had attempted to hide it there, and had been disturbed. The prisoner had obstinately refused, since his arrest, to speak a word.

"The magistrate glanced at the prisoner. There was no change in him; he stood there with the same unintelligent cast of countenance.

"'Have you any other evidence?' inquired the magistrate.

"'None, your worship; we have not had time to make inquiries for the owner of the cash-box.'

"'Is any thing known of the prisoner?'

"'Nothing more, sir, than that he answers the description sent to the different police-stations of a lunatic who left his home in Bethnal Green some days since.'

"'Who was the woman who was taken out of court just now? His mother, I suppose?'

"'She is, your worsnip.'

"'Is she sufficiently recovered to give any information? If so, let her be brought in.'

"A policeman left the court, and, a few moments afterwards, returned with Mrs. Watkins. She was questioned by the magistrate whether she knew in what manner her son had become possessed of the money; at the same time he informed her he would not press the question if she declined answering.

"The poor woman had no objection to make. She narrated as clearly as she could the whole circumstances attendant on the loss of the cash-box, and she spoke with

so much appearance of truth that it carried conviction along with it. The magistrate listened with attention and interest, and then inquired who was the solicitor who had acted on her son William's behalf on the former occasion. Mrs. Watkins gave the address, and a messenger was immediately dispatched to find him. In the mean time the case was adjourned till he should arrive. Fortunately the messenger found him at home, and, in the course of an hour, the solicitor was in attendance at the police-court.

"Edmond and his mother were again brought into court, but this time he was not placed in the dock, the poor fellow's insanity being so apparent as to render him an object rather of sympathy than suspicion. He occupied a seat beside his mother, who sat holding her son's hand in her own. Before hearing the solicitor's statement, the magistrate sent for the police-district surgeon, that he might pass an opinion on the prisoner's state of mind. Before he arrived, the solicitor began his statement, detailing all the circumstances which had come under his notice in the case—how suspicion had fallen on William, as well as the somewhat illegal compromise which had been effected by the sale of the widow's annuity. The contents of the cash-box were then placed in his hands, and they were found to correspond with the amount paid to Mr. Nugent.

"The district surgeon then stated that his attention had been already called to the prisoner's state of mind, and he had no hesitation in saying that he was quite insane; he had never seen a better-marked case. He then—in answer to the magistrate's question, 'How he accounted for the fact that Edmond, who appeared to have taken the cash-box during his first paroxysm of insanity, should have continued to conceal it when the

attack was over, but had again possessed himself of it during a second attack of mania'—said that more than one case was on record where an act committed in a first attack of insanity had been forgotten on the patient's return to health, and yet had returned to the memory during the paroxysm of a second attack. These cases, he admitted, were exceedingly rare, but he considered the prisoner's one of the class. To divine what could have actuated the prisoner to visit the spot where the cash-box had been concealed, a second time, would be extremely difficult; possibly a vague idea of the deep distress his mother appeared to be in, might indirectly have moved him; but that was mere surmise.

"The magistrate, then addressing the solicitor, remarked that, without doubting any thing he had stated, he should still hardly consider himself justified in discharging the prisoner, or giving up possession of the money, without further inquiries being made. He should make an order that Edmond should remain for the present in charge of the parochial authorities, where he would have every attention paid him; and his mother would at all times be allowed to see him. He should adjourn the case for three days, when, he was persuaded, every thing would be fully cleared up.

"The solicitor then explained to Mrs. Watkins, who appeared hardly to understand the proceeding, the reasons which actuated the magistrate. They then left the court, and after Mrs. Watkins had taken leave of her son, the solicitor called a cab, and they left for her home.

"When in the cab, the solicitor inquired as delicately as he could, into Mrs. Watkins's circumstances. At first she endeavored to make them appear better than they really were; but her own pallid look and squalid attire told that she was concealing the real state of the case;

and in a short time her companion discovered that both she and her niece were actually starving. He then placed three sovereigns in her possession, telling her that the next day he would supply her with more. If the solicitor was surprised at the widow's statement, that surprise was greatly increased when he witnessed the abject poverty of their lodgings. Emma also excited his sympathy in the highest degree; it was, in fact, impossible to look upon the mild, resigned countenance of the suffering girl, without being interested in her behalf. Delicacy moved him to leave them for the present; but before quitting the house he told Mrs. Watkins that he would call in the course of the day on the representatives of the late Mr. Nugent, and would visit her again in the evening, to communicate the result of his mission.

"He had scarcely left the house, when the landlady entered the room. The first intelligence she received was that Edmond was found; the second, that she would immediately receive the three weeks' rent then owing. The landlady then exerted herself to get breakfast for Mrs. Watkins and Emma; who, as might naturally be supposed, were completely exhausted. After some slight repose, Mrs. Watkins commenced redeeming the different portions of their wardrobe that were then in pledge, and making purchases of necessaries they had occasion for. That done, she began to put their rooms in better order, so that when the solicitor called in the evening, the two poor women, as well as their apartment, wore an appearance of comfort that had been a stranger to them for many months past.

"When their professional friend called, he informed them that he had seen Mr. Nugent's executors, and all would be satisfactorily arranged. He also advised her to move to a more respectable quarter of the town, and

volunteered to assist them in finding apartments. 'I am truly surprised,' he said, 'to find you in such a situation, and still more so, that your son, who must now be in the possession of money, should allow you to remain in it.'

"'Poor fellow, if he could only see us, I am sure that all the misery we have felt would be trifling to the sorrow it would cause him.'

"The solicitor looked greatly surprised at hearing the remark, for he had imagined that William must have long since found out his mother. Mrs. Watkins noticed the expression of surprise on his countenance, and continued—

"'We wrote to him to assist us, but, by some extraordinary chance, we have never received an answer. Perhaps he might not have been in Melbourne when our letter arrived, or his answer has miscarried. I am sure he loves us as much at this moment as when he left England.'

"The solicitor was for the moment puzzled in what manner to act. He feared telling her, and especially Emma in her delicate state, the fact that William was in England, lest the shock might be too great for them to bear.

"'When did you hear from him last?' he inquired.

"'About six months since. He then led us to hope that when he next wrote he might be able to name the time for us to leave England to join him.'

"'Are you quite sure it was not his intention to come to England to fetch you?'

"This remark, although the solicitor attempted an indifferent tone, betrayed a suspicion to the mother that he knew more than he chose to say, and she pressed him on the subject.

"'Well,' said he, 'the truth is, or I am very much mistaken, I saw him in London a few weeks since.'

"'Sir,' said Mrs. Watkins, 'pray tell me all; I am sure, from your face, you know more.'

"'Well, then, he called upon me to find out your address, but I unfortunately did not know it.'

"*La joie fait peur.* The shock this intelligence caused the poor woman developed itself in a violent fit of hysterics on the part of Mrs. Watkins, and a sympathetic flood of tears on Emma's. However, as tears are far more easily arrested when caused by the sudden intelligence that an event one has long hoped for, at last has taken place, than when an irretrievable misfortune has given rise to them, calm was at last restored. The solicitor informed them that although he had omitted to ask William for his address, still there would be little difficulty in finding him, and he pledged himself to take immediate steps, by advertisement or otherwise, to procure it. Before parting for the evening, Emma suggested that it would be a great shock to William to find his mother in such circumstances, and asked the solicitor whether, as they were now likely to become possessed of the money, there would be any difficulty in their moving immediately to some other locality. The solicitor replied there would be none whatever, and offered his services to procure another lodging for them the next day; he also suggested it should be near their old quarters, as possibly William might still be searching for them, and he naturally would seek for them in a neighborhood where they were known. Mrs. Watkins replied that she would be entirely guided by his judgment on the occasion; and after a little more conversation he left them, in a state of mind as totally different from that they were under when that morning's light broke upon them as it was possible to imagine.

CHAPTER XX.

MEMORY IN MADNESS—CONCLUDED.

"We must now return to William. Not having left his address with the solicitor, he had been kept in ignorance of all that had transpired. True, Edmond's affair had found its way into the public papers, but at that time William was in the west of Ireland on his duties of administration to the effects of his late partner, and thus missed seeing it. When he returned to London he again began his inquiries, but still without success. He found that when his mother left her lodgings in Lambeth, she left her address with the postman, so that her letters might be forwarded to her; but whether the man failed to transmit it to the proper authorities, which, however, he denied, or whether, from the frequency of letters missing their destination when sent to the obscure courts of Bethnal Green, it is impossible to determine; but his letter had never reached her, and he found it in the dead-letter office. He was now for some time fairly at a loss how to proceed. At last he determined on putting advertisements into the papers, but this plan was attended with no better result than the others. Still he hoped on, resolved that he would not leave England without finding his mother and Emma.

"In the mean time his executor's duties were finished, and his purchases made and forwarded to Australia. He had also received letters from his partner in the colony, and by them he found his affairs there had not only progressed favorably, but to an extent his wildest hopes

could not have anticipated. Not only had the discovery of the gold fields increased the business of the firm to a very considerable degree, but the influx of population it had occasioned into the colony had increased so enormously the value of land near Melbourne, that that alone was sufficient to constitute him a man of considerable property, and the garden attached to his cottage there was now most valuable as building-land.

"But while every thing appeared to require his presence in the colony, not one idea of his leaving England without his mother and Emma for a moment entered his imagination. He now set regularly to work, day after day, to find them. At last, without much hopes of success, he again applied at Bethlem Hospital. On his first visit to the establishment, shortly after his arrival in England, he found that his brother had quitted it, greatly improved, about twelve months before, and since that time they had heard nothing of him. On his second application, to his great astonishment, he found his brother was again a patient within its walls. William immediately requested to see him, and the request was granted. He found Edmond so much altered that he could hardly recognize him. The poor fellow had, nevertheless, somewhat recovered since his renewed residence in the hospital. His mind, however, the little of it that had returned, was chiefly occupied with Catholic religious ceremonies. He did not know William, and the little conversation his brother addressed to him was completely lost on him. William, greatly distressed, turned from him, and inquired if they could give him the address of his mother. They told him that, on leaving the building, he had only to inquire at the porter's lodge and he would receive it. He did so, and found his mother was living at the house of a music-seller in Isling

ton, where, formerly, Emma used to purchase the music she required. William immediately drove there, and, when he arrived, stood for some moments opposite the house, wanting courage to enter. At last the knocker was in his hand, and the door had hardly opened before mother and son were in each other's arms. In this position they remained for some moments in perfect happiness, which was at last disturbed by the appearance of a tall, pallid figure, at the head of the stairs. It was Emma, who had heard her aunt's cry of joy, and had hastened to join her. William's delight at the sight of his betrothed at first hid from him the terrible change in her appearance. It was only after they had entered the sitting-room that the sad fact became apparent to him. He there took her hand, and gazed at her steadfastly for a moment, when his eyes filled with tears which he in vain endeavored to restrain. Emma fully understood him.

"'William, dear, I shall soon be better now; indeed I shall. You don't know what we have gone through, or you would not wonder at my looking so poorly.'

"While she spoke, the hectic flush on the countenance of the poor girl so plainly contradicted her prognostications, that even William, ignorant enough in matters of the kind, could not fail to perceive it. His mother came to Emma's aid, and William dried his tears. They remained together that evening, he listening to the mitigated account his mother gave of her sufferings, and she, on her part, hearing with intense satisfaction the tale of his success, and the brilliant prospects which appeared open to him. It was long past midnight when he left them. As there was another room vacant in the same house, it was arranged that William should take it, and the next day found the fond family again happily living under the same roof.

"They now began to speak of their departure, but a grave objection presented itself. Emma's health was so delicate, it was feared she would be unable to support the voyage. Before deciding, it was resolved to take the advice of a physician, eminently skilful in diseases of the chest. Mrs. Watkins went with Emma to his house, and had with him a long and careful consultation on her case. The result was that although there certainly were symptoms of a most alarming nature, still, with care, change of climate, and absence from emotional excitement or fatigue, there was a chance of her recovery. On being questioned on the possibility of her supporting the Australian voyage, he replied, that if she left England shortly, say early in the month of September, and the first part of the voyage were calm and prosperous, she could not adopt a better method of cure; but that if she suffered any great fatigue at the commencement, from sea-sickness or bad weather, the result might be most unfortunate.

"William waited at home in a state of great anxiety, to know the result of their visit. When he heard it, he determined to start as soon as it was possible for Emma and his mother to complete their arrangements for the voyage. He visited the East India docks, where he found a first-class ship would leave in a fortnight. It chanced that he was acquainted with the captain, who was not only a good sailor, but a most gentlemanly man as well, and who happened to be on board at the moment. Two cabins were immediately secured, one for his mother and Emma, the other for himself. The deposit-money was paid before he left the ship, and it was arranged they should join her at Plymouth. He, on his way home, called at an outfitter's, and requested he would wait on his mother and Emma the next morning,

to take an order for their outfit, and then, after purchasing the cabin requisites, he returned to the house.

"The day arrived for them to leave London. Little time had been lost in leave-taking; they had but few acquaintances, and no friends. William, without informing his mother, had removed his brother from Bethlem to the Shirley Hall Asylum. He experienced great difficulty in persuading her, when she heard of it, to abstain from taking leave of the poor fellow, but at last he succeeded. Afterwards, indeed, she acknowledged the justice of his arguments, and consoled herself with the idea that she had escaped a most painful interview, which could have resulted in no benefit to either.

"When they arrived at Plymouth, they found Emma dreadfully fatigued by her journey, so much so, indeed, as to cause them considerable alarm. She kept up her courage, however, and the next day the ship sailed. Fortunately, the weather was as favorable as could have been desired. A light northeasterly wind wafted them gently out of the Channel, and accompanied them across the Bay of Biscay, nor did it leave them till they were in the latitude of Gibraltar. Emma, during the whole of the time, experienced but little inconvenience, but had gained considerably in strength. In short, by the time the ship had arrived at Melbourne, she was in better health than perhaps she had been in since she left Italy.

"Great as William had expected to find the change in the aspect of Melbourne, he was perfectly astonished at the metamorphosis he witnessed. The enormous increase in the buildings, the bustle and excitement which met him on every side, were perfectly bewildering. He also found his garden-ground had increased in value to a fabulous amount. Several offers were made to him for different portions of it, some of which he accepted. With

some difficulty he found a lodging for his mother and Emma, while he paid a visit to his partner. He found, when he arrived at the store, that hitherto quiet neighborhood had shared in the general excitement, and that business had increased enormously. His partner proposed that William should again visit Melbourne, and return with his mother and Emma, as there was now at the store ample accommodation for them. William joyfully accepted the offer, and in a few weeks returned with his mother and Emma. Short as had been his absence, it had sufficed to make preparations for the wedding. One month later they were married, and a happier couple it would have been impossible to find even in the realms of romance.

"To conclude. After a twelvemonth's residence at the store, William and his partner determined on greatly extending their business. They had already established an office in Melbourne, and their transactions had increased so much in importance, that it was resolved one of the partners should reside constantly in England. It was at last agreed between them that William should accept that portion of their duties, to the great satisfaction of Mrs. Watkins, who much wished to return. William, having disposed of the remainder of his building-land, left Melbourne with his wife and mother, and arrived safely in London, where they have since resided; and William is now not only among the richest of Australian merchants, but also among the most respected."

The narratives I have already laid before the reader had hardly been set up in type when I was one morning surprised by a visit from my publisher. After the usual courtesies of meeting were over, he drew from the pocket

of his Inverness cape a somewhat bulky roll of paper, tied round with a piece of red tape. This he leisurely unloosened, and, to my great surprise, I found the roll to contain the manuscript of several tales destined by me to be a portion of the present work.

"I trust," said he, noticing my surprise, "you will not be offended at what I am about to say, but, upon due consideration, I have come to the conclusion that it is better to finish our book at the point we have arrived at, than to go on with it further. Already it forms a somewhat bulky volume. There is also to consider, it may possibly not have the success we hope for, and, therefore, it will be as well for you to write me the concluding chapter at once, and we will forthwith bring the work before the public."

"The concluding chapter is already written; but pray, may I ask, what has led you to believe the success of the book is not certain?"

"I have no better reason than the following: You, without exception, have made all your principal actors insane, and although that is certainly an original idea, we cannot be equally sure it will be a successful one."

"All insane, did you say?" I inquired, in an offended tone.

"Of course," said he, "I made a full exception in your own case. I trust you did not for a moment imagine the contrary."

"But," I replied, perfectly appeased, "you should have told me your opinion before. I have naturally retained my most interesting tales till the last. I would much rather have published those you have omitted than those you have printed."

"That the interest of the tales I hold in my hand is far superior to those I have printed I am perfectly ready to admit; also, that the interest of those already struck off

has been accumulative, each increasing in interest over its predecessor; in fact, '*de plus fort en plus fort, comme chez Nicolet.*' But remember, as a publisher, I must also look at the matter in a business-like point of view. In my experience, I have heard of cases (certainly not among the majority of modern novels) where the intensity of the interest has been prejudicial to the sale of the work, and I should be sorry that a cause of the kind should in any way be detrimental to the success of 'The Monomaniac.'"

He paused for my answer, but I gave him none. In fact, his objection startled me. In my unfortunate experiments on the accumulative tendency of forces, I had, quite contrary to my wish, arrived at a terrible result I had never dreamt of when I commenced the study; and if the interest of my narratives should prove also to be accumulative in similar, or even less proportions, what present unseen fearful effect might not be the consequence? This difficulty, of which I could not see the end, kept me silent. Seeing I made no attempt to answer him, he went on:

"There is also another circumstance connected with the withdrawal of these tales which should be taken into consideration. If your work should be a success, and a second edition called for, you could easily insert them, and that would not only be an advantage in tempting new purchasers to buy, but also, from the great augmentation of size it would occasion in the volume, many of those who bought the first edition would possess themselves of copies of the second to have the work complete."

This remark of the publisher convinced me. I immediately gave my consent to the withdrawal of the tales, which he then placed in my custody, and in return, I gave into his hands the following concluding chapter.

CHAPTER XXI.

CONCLUSION—MY ESCAPE FROM THE ASYLUM.

I HAD hardly passed the fifth anniversary of my sojourn in the asylum, when a marked difference took place in the manner and character of Dr. Meadows. From being excessively courteous and patient, he became exceedingly caustic and irritable, and the amiable attention he had hitherto been accustomed to bestow on those unfortunates committed to his care, changed into a carelessness and indifference utterly out of place with duties as onerous as those with which he was intrusted. In fact, the patients in our part of the asylum seldom saw him, except at dinner-time, and even then with no great regularity, while his visits to the incurables were frequently two or three days asunder. But what annoyed me the most was the affliction his altered behavior caused his poor wife. We had noticed for more than twelve months past that her dress, and that of her children, had become more and more shabby, although this appeared to have but little effect on her spirits, but now she seemed utterly distressed and broken-hearted. Although we had not been directly informed on the matter, there was little doubt this change had been caused in some way by that accursed organ, for the doctor seemed now utterly absorbed in its advancement. Day by day and all day long were the most lugubrious sounds issuing from the room in which it was built, and night was frequently made hideous from the same cause.

When first I entered the asylum, three years was the time the doctor had allowed himself for the completion of his organ, but at the end of the fifth it was far from being finished. True, during the fourth and fifth years, with the exception of the last month, the work had somewhat languished, but now it progressed (judging from its groans) incessantly.

My curiosity at last was insupportable, and I requested Mme. Reumont, whose curiosity on the subject was as great as my own, to obtain from Mrs. Meadows the cause of her unhappiness; this was the more easy to accomplish as a certain sort of intimacy was established between the two ladies, and Mme. Reumont frequently assisted Mrs. Meadows in the education of her young children in their different studies, with the exception of Greek history, which Mrs. Meadows had especial instructions from the doctor to avoid.

Mme. Reumont with great ease accomplished her task. On hearing her report, my indignation against the doctor was aroused to a point difficult to describe. It appeared that the construction of the organ had, during the past two years, made little progress in consequence of the doctor's want of funds, but although his handicraft had languished, unfortunately his brain had been fully employed, and he had invented a new stop, which, in his idea, if carried out, would make his fortune. The unfortunate conclusion he had arrived at, that of complete success, utterly destroyed the small stock of prudence he had still left, and he mortgaged in the first instance, unknown to his wife, a small income of some thirty pounds a year, which had been bequeathed to her by a distant relative, but which unfortunately had never been secured to her. Of course the law expenses were heavy on the small amount raised, and the

interest he had agreed to pay was in proportion equally exorbitant. There was, he considered, a good chance of fortune open to him if he completed his organ as rapidly as possible, and he worked at it unceasingly, night and day, the small capital he possessed vanishing rapidly the while.

It was with great difficulty I concealed from him my indignation; fortunately, in one respect, I met him but seldom. I discovered, however, that his insanity had carried him even beyond the limits told me by Mme. Reumont, for he had applied for a patent for his invention, and to accomplish this he had accepted bills at a ruinous rate of discount to obtain the extra money he required.

This information decided me. I took the opportunity of inviting those of the patients who were likely to understand my arguments, to meet me in the garden, near the spot where the memorable interview took place between Dinah Searle and Mr. Brown. To meet them unknown by the establishment officials was by no means so difficult as might have been expected, for as I have already said, the doctor was occupied all day with his organ, and as a natural sequence, all the assistants were proportionally remiss in their duties.

It was on a fine summer's afternoon when we met. There were ten gentlemen including myself; the only lady was Mme. Reumont, the two other lady-patients I did not think it advisable to invite. Proceedings commenced by my being requested to act as chairman, and I was then invited to express my views of the doctor's conduct. This I did with all the little eloquence I was master of. In the first place I commenced with great caution. I stated that although there were doubtless more than one among us to whom restraint was a mat-

ter of prudence, the majority were residing in the asylum solely for the sake of retirement, and of being under the supervision of a gentleman whose principal charge was to minister to their comfort and health. It was, however, a question now for them to consider, whether the present behavior of Dr. Meadows was or was not such as rendered him unworthy of the appointment he held; and whether it was not inconsistent with common sense that a man conducting himself little better than a mischievous maniac should have the control of those, the most infirm of whom were infinitely more rational than himself. The question was now before them, and any proposition that might be made by any gentleman present on the subject could now be entertained.

I waited patiently for some one to speak, but as no one appeared willing to take the lead, I again repeated my invitation. After a little time a gentleman begged to offer a few remarks. He began lucidly enough, and spoke of the doctor's behavior most rationally; but as he progressed he diverged considerably from the subject, till at last I was obliged to call his attention to the question before the meeting, as I found he had got into a disquisition on the uses for which Providence had designed the tobacco-plant. He became exceedingly angry at my impertinent interference, as he called it, and left the meeting. I then inquired if any other gentleman would like to address the meeting, but no one answered. I next endeavored to give them courage by speaking myself. I showed that by tacitly standing by while the doctor was ruining his wife and family, we were, to a certain degree, making ourselves participators in the matter, and that common humanity should induce us to interfere. That even if the doctor were in his right senses, it was

derogatory in us to admit his authority while pursuing his absurd occupation; for a man of science, however learned, however humane, was, while irrationally following up a ruinous hobby, a just object of ridicule and contempt even to a community of lunatics.

This sentence, which I had hoped would have produced a most favorable effect, had one unfortunately precisely the contrary, for each seemed to think I alluded personally to him in the term lunatic, and that I excepted myself. I had great difficulty in overcoming the unfortunate impression; but at last I succeeded. In the end, a considerable amount of animation was aroused among them by my eloquence; and I was on the point of explaining to them my plan for setting the doctor's authority completely at defiance, when, unfortunately, that gentleman made his appearance at the farther extremity of the walk, and all my auditors, as if by magic, immediately vanished, with the exception of Mme. Reumont, who faithfully stood by me to the last. I must confess, however, so strong is the force of habit, that I felt my courage rapidly diminish when I saw the doctor; and even poor Xerxes' cheek became paler than usual. My alarm increased as the doctor approached us, till it became too great to bear. I then offered my arm to my fair companion, and turning down a side walk, we made our escape in a most undignified manner.

It must not be imagined that, although I left the field in a somewhat hurried manner, my determination to resist the doctor's authority was in any way diminished; on the contrary, I felt annoyed with myself for not having shown a bold face when I saw him in the garden. At the same time, I must confess, the opposition I intended to offer him was by no means that of open rebellion, but rather to effect a successful retreat. In plain English, I

intended, if possible, to escape from the asylum. For some time I deliberated whether I would acquaint any of the patients with my design. Prudence taught me that my secret would run a far better chance of being kept if I concealed my intention; but, after a little consideration, I found I should require some assistance, so I resolved on making a confidant of Mme. Reumont. My principal reason for this was, that she had ready access to Mrs. Meadows's sitting-room, and I felt certain that the keys, opening the doors of the house as well as the entrance-gates, were frequently left in her custody.

Mme. Reumont received my communication in a manner I little expected. She readily promised to assist me, but only on the condition that she should be allowed to accompany me. This was certainly a far greater honor than I had wished for, not that I would not most readily assist her, but that I feared that I should have great difficulty in deciding what I should do with her when we were at liberty. Scandal, I thought, might also be busy on the subject; for although Mme. Reumont's age, appearance, and strict propriety of demeanor, would be a sufficient guarantee to any one with a well-regulated mind, still all mankind were not so well-disposed, and for a country newspaper, the description of an elopement from a lunatic asylum would be too great a boon for a conscientious reporter to miss.

I endeavored to put these reasons before Mme. Reumont in their objectionable form, but I found she had made up her mind on the subject, and I could not alter her determination. She also told me, with as near an approach to a blush as she could put on without artificial assistance, that a strict sense of propriety was one reason for her wishing to escape—that, in fact, the odious Mr.

Brown, of whose character the reader has already had a description, had lately been making himself "very particular," and she was resolved she would no longer expose herself to his advances. Finding she continued resolute I gave way, and she promised to obtain for me, if possible, the information I required respecting the keys being occasionally left in Mrs. Meadows's custody.

Her first visit to Mrs. Meadows after our conversation put her in possession of the fact that a duplicate set of keys were always kept in the upper drawer of an escritoire in that lady's bed-room, and, moreover, that this drawer she had never seen locked, so the keys, if necessary, could easily be obtained.

To escape from the asylum seemed now no difficult feat, and I immediately began to make preparations for carrying it into effect. My only trouble now was what I should do with Mme. Reumont when we were once outside the walls of the establishment; but I had given my word to take her with me, and I had no alternative but to keep it. For my own part, I purposed getting safely lodged in some quiet street in London, and then to write to my wife, informing her of the step I had taken. She was at the time residing in the south of France, whither she had been obliged to remove in consequence of the consumptive tendency of my son.

My first step was to remove certain indispensable garments from my room, and place them in a carpet-bag, which I concealed in a shrubbery near the entrance gates. I requested Mme. Reumont to follow my example, and the same time advising her to take as few things as possible, as we should have to walk some miles before we should arrive at the nearest railway station. She promised to follow my advice, and for once, a lady's idea of a small package, in relation to luggage, and a gentleman's

perfectly corresponded. A bonnet-box was all she required, and that, from the nature of its construction, refused to carry any thing heavy. This, when in order, was hidden with my carpet-bag; and, as all things were now ready for our departure, if we could obtain the keys, I requested Mme. Reumont to possess herself of them as soon as she possibly could.

To my great satisfaction, the next night the opportunity presented itself. About nine o'clock that evening Mme. Reumont was in Mrs. Meadows's bed-room, when the doctor's voice was heard below asking impatiently some questions of a servant, to which, however, he could get no answer. As he appeared, by his voice, to be getting very angry, his wife left her room in order to play the part of peace-maker, and in her absence Mme. Reumont possessed herself of the keys. Shortly afterwards she invented an excuse to leave Mrs. Meadows, and having found me in the garden, she told me of the success of her proceedings. She then placed the keys in my hands, and it was arranged that about midnight I should go to her room, as we might then be tolerably certain the household would be in their first sleep, and our escape would be the more easy. Every thing fell out as we wished. With very little difficulty the keys were fitted to the locks, and these were too frequently used not to turn easily. We then crept along the darkest walks till we arrived at the spot where our luggage was concealed, and all being now ready for departure, we opened the front gates, and the next moment found ourselves in full liberty on the common.

Although I did not know the road to the railway station at ——, I knew tolerably well in what position it lay, and I bore away for it across the common, finding my way as I best could, which occasionally was some-

what difficult, not only from my own inability readily to surmount the obstacles I encountered; but with the difficulty I also had with my companion who was far less agile than myself. Fortunately, after we had been about two hours on foot, the day began to break, and this rendered our task the more easy, as we could now, to a certain extent, choose our way. Mme. Reumont, in fact, bore up wonderfully indeed; she did not appear to suffer from fatigue more than myself. Little conversation passed between us; we were both too much occupied with our own thoughts. About five o'clock we met an old farm-laborer going to his work, and of him we inquired the way to the railway station. He seemed greatly surprised to see us, but made no remark, and pointed out our way to us civilly enough. He, moreover, told us, that if we walked on smartly we should catch the train which started at seven o'clock for London.

This intelligence gave us fresh courage, and we started onward again on our journey, and all the more speedily as we were now upon the high-road. In fact, such good speed did we make, that we reached the railway station nearly twenty minutes before the train started. By degrees, passengers began to arrive, and take their tickets, and I procured two for the first class for myself and companion. We then seated ourselves on a bench on the platform to wait for the arrival of the train. I hardly knew, at first, for what reason all the passengers appeared to regard us with looks of great surprise; at last, however, I was able to account for it. On glancing at the face of my companion, I noticed a certain wildness of expression I had never remarked in her while we were residing in the asylum. In fact, I was obliged to admit the astonishment visible

in the countenances of the other passengers was not to be wondered at.

I was much annoyed at the circumstanee, and was on the point of requesting her to put down her veil, so as in part to conceal her face, when she touched me on the arm, and whispered that she wished to speak to me for a moment. She then rose and walked to an unfrequented part of the platform. I followed her immediately, and when we were out of ear-shot of the others, she stopped: "Do not think I wish to offend you," she said, with much sympathy of tone and manner; "but there is a peculiar expression on your face which seems to attract the curiosity of the passengers. Do you not think it will be more agreeable for you if we kept somewhat away from them?"

I was perfectly astonished at the poor woman's remark. I never in my life had heard a more complete piece of female vanity, or a greater proof with what facility women can shut their eyes to any thing uncomplimentary. I, however, gave in to her folly, and we waited apart from the rest till the train arrived, when I, fortunately, found an unoccupied *coupé* for three persons, and in it I placed Mme. Reumont. Before entering it myself, I whispered to the guard, that my companion was suffering under an unfortunate delusion, and that I should feel obliged if he would put no other passengers into our compartment. He looked at me, I thought, in a somewhat impertinent manner, but promised he would do as I requested, and I must do him the justice to say he kept his word.

The train moved off. I threw myself back in the carriage and spoke not a word to my companion, for her observation about my expression of countenance had annoyed me extremely. Presently I became drowsy,

and shortly afterwards I fell asleep. I know not how long I continued so, or how many stations we passed; but at last I was awoke, not only by the train stopping, but also by the loud sobbing of Mme. Reumont. I roused myself and looked around me, and the cause of her grief was in a moment apparent. A company of Highland soldiers were awaiting on the platform of the station the arrival of the train, and no sooner had Mme. Reumont cast her eyes on them than the spirit of Xerxes immediately took possession of her body, and she forthwith gave way to her sorrow on the old subject—that in how short a time they would be no more. As the train had to wait some minutes at the station, the soldiers, attracted by her singular appearance, gathered round the carriage at first in astonishment; but when they perceived the burlesque sorrow of the poor lady, that feeling turned to merriment, and they broke into a loud laugh each time any particularly absurd gesture caught their attention.

I cannot describe how terribly annoyed I was at the whole scene. I bent forward, and begged Mme. Reumont to lean back from the window. She paid me little attention, and then only replied to my entreaty by an impatient gesture, which did not pass without notice by the soldiers, one of whom caught sight of me in my corner, and immediately communicated the fact to his comrades. Bad as the conduct of the men had been before, it now became intolerably worse. A certain sort of rude gallantry had restrained them only to laughing at Mme. Reumont's behavior; but in my case it was different; every coarse jest they could think of was immediately played off on me, some asking Mme. Reumont whether that strange-looking cove in the corner was her young man; others, whether we had

had a quarrel; if so they were sure she was right, and they would stand up for her. Some advised her to leave such an ill-looking humbug as I was and join their party; while another had the abominable insolence to advise us to kiss and make it up.

My anger was rising fast at this annoyance, and I hardly know to what length it would have carried me, when the station-master's bell fortunately sounded. The soldiers were then obliged to take their seats in the carriages prepared for them, and for the moment I was relieved from their presence.

As soon as the train moved on, I attempted to expostulate with Mme. Reumont on her absurd conduct, but I met with no success; on the contrary, she threatened me that, if I did not desist, she would put herself at the head of her troops at the next station. I was so vexed with her, that, had she put her threat into execution, I do not believe it would have caused me the slightest annoyance; but when I remembered the absurd hallucination under which she labored, I thought it would be ungenerous on my part to withdraw from her my protection exactly at the moment she most required it. I therefore took no further notice of her, but let her continue her sobs as long as she pleased.

Each time the train stopped, which fortunately was not very often, I had a repetition of the infliction, but on no other occasion did I attempt to interfere with the poor woman, but allowed her to continue her absurd behavior undisturbed.

At last my tormentors, the Highlanders, to my great joy, left the train, and the remaining portion of the journey passed without further annoyance from Mme. Reumont. Indeed, to my great relief, she, worn out by her long walk in the night, and entranced by the ridicu-

lous display she had made of her feelings, fell fast asleep; nor did she once awake during the last fifty miles of our journey.

I had now ample time and opportunity to indulge in my own thoughts, and they turned naturally on the inventions I had carried on to such a dangerous degree. The rapidity at which the train was rolling on contributed, in no slight manner, to that current of thought. The more I reflected on the subject the more attractive it became; and at last the idea came over me whether it would not be possible to carry on my invention, solely as far as related to the motive-power for propelling railway carriages, and resolutely to abstain from the temptation of pursuing the study further. The more I thought over the matter the more possible it appeared. "Why, after all," I argued, "should I keep from mankind an invention which would immensely benefit them, merely from the possibility that I might carry it to as a point so terribly destructive, to endanger the universe? If such an idea were to actuate others, no physician would prescribe a narcotic for a patient in pain, for fear of being tempted to carry on the prescription till it had caused the death of the individual prescribed for. No; I was resolved. I would go on with my invention for the improvement of locomotives, and that I would manfully resist all temptations to carry it further."

I now began to apply my thoughts to the mechanical combinations requisite for the proper working of my engine; and every thing appeared so clearly defined before me that success was certain. The rapidity of the train—for we did not stop once during the last forty miles of our journey—contributed to assist me in my plans, by proving that, if the engine drawing us, even

with the present immense rapidity, was under perfect control, it would require only a little more study on my part to complete and control an engine which would immeasurably surpass every locomotive at present at work.

This current of thought continued till our speed slackened previous to our arrival at our journey's end; and then for the first time I began to consider in what part of the metropolis I should take up my abode. After thinking the subject over for a few minutes, I resolved on applying at the house of a respectable woman living in Lambeth, and who formerly had been in our service, and, in fact, who had married from our house.

The train stopped, and the collector applied for our tickets. I now aroused my companion from her slumbers with some little difficulty, but it required a great deal more to make her collect her scattered senses. Frankly, when I looked at her, I was ashamed of being seen in her society, so deplorable was the figure she made. Her bonnet was completely crushed by leaning it against the cushions of the carriage. The tears had dried upon her face with the dust which had also accumulated on it during our journey, and her long gray hair hung in disorder on her cheeks. Altogether she presented just as disreputable an appearance of excessive maudlin intoxication as could well be imagined. When we alighted from the carriages we were stared at and commented on by everybody. The porters laughed openly at us, and the cabmen appeared to have resolved unanimously not to take us. There we stood on the platform till the rest of the passengers had left, but we still had around us a group of idlers, who were insufferably annoying. At last a good-natured policeman

obtained for us a cab, and we proceeded to the lodging-house in Lambeth.

Fortunately, we found the landlady at home, and we were ushered by her into her little parlor. I was somewhat annoyed at the total absence of pleasure she exhibited on seeing me, but I soon justly attributed it to the surprise our visit must have caused her. I told her we wished to take her apartments, and inquired what rooms she had at the moment to let. She hesitated for some time, and then told me she had none; that her house was quite full. This I knew to be untrue, as the bill announcing apartments to let still remained in the window. At last I understood the reason of her behavior—the extraordinary appearance of Mme. Reumont evidently alarmed her. I told her I wished to speak to her in private, and we went into the passage, leaving Mme. Reumont in the parlor. When we were by ourselves, I shortly explained to her the unfortunate infirmity of my poor fellow-traveller, and that it was my intention immediately to apply to her friends, to have her placed under restraint. She simply replied by asking me if my wife knew of my being in London? I told her she did not, but that I proposed writing to her the next day, informing her of the circumstance. I further explained to her my reasons for leaving Shirley Hall, and I then requested her to accommodate us, even if it were only for a few days. She made no further objection, and assigned to us the parlor as our sitting-room. To Mme. Reumont she gave a bed-room at the top of the house; mine was to be the small room behind the parlor. She then left us to prepare our dinner, and, in the mean time, Mme. Reumont and myself each retired to our rooms to make what little toilet preparations we could before our meal was ready.

It is but justice to say, that when Mme. Reumont presented herself at the dinner-table her appearance had wonderfully improved from what it was when we entered the house. During our meal, little conversation passed between us, for I was still exceedingly annoyed at her behavior in the train. After dinner she went out for a walk with the landlady, for the purpose of making some purchases, but I remained at home to write a letter to my dear wife, informing her of the step I had taken. It was nearly nine o'clock before I had completed it, and then, as I felt exceedingly fatigued, I went to bed without waiting for the return of Mme. Reumont and the landlady. I soon fell asleep, but was awakened by some persons talking in the passage—they were Mme. Reumont and the landlady.

"Poor man!" said Mme. Reumont; "you have no idea of the trouble I had with him in the train. He made himself so ridiculous, that all eyes were upon us."

I was so enraged at the remark, that had not delicacy prevented me, I should have leaped out of bed and ordered her to leave the house, but I resolved the next morning to give her such a lesson as should teach her the propriety of holding her tongue, or the necessity of seeking another dwelling.

The next morning I awoke at a somewhat late hour. On going into the parlor I found the breakfast laid for only one person. I rang the bell, and inquired the cause. I was told, in reply, that Mme. Reumont had taken an early breakfast in her own room, and had immediately afterwards left the house, promising to be home to dinner. "No matter," I thought; "my lesson shall not be the less severe for that."

After breakfast, my first act was to post the letter to my wife, my next to call on my solicitor; fortunately I

found him at home. He appeared perfectly astonished to see me, so much so, in fact, that at first I felt somewhat annoyed. I told him my reasons for leaving the asylum, and my determination to go on with my inventions, and I concluded by asking him to advance me some money for that purpose. He replied that at the moment he was somewhat short of cash, but that he would write me a check for twenty pounds. He then inquired if I had written to my wife? I told him I had, and he said I had done well, or she would naturally have felt great uneasiness at my escape, if the intelligence had reached her from any indifferent person. He then advised me, in relation to my invention, not to make any models, but simply to content myself with drawings, till I was fully prepared to carry out my plans, and then he would assist me as far as lay in his power. He also kindly requested me to call on him frequently, and explain to him the progress I made,—all of which I readily promised, and I afterwards took my leave of him, determined to act exactly by his advice.

I arrived at home about half an hour before dinner-time, and after making some hasty preparations, I seated myself in the parlor, determining before we commenced our meal, to have a perfect understanding with Mme. Reumont. Dinner was served up, but as Mme. Reumont had not yet appeared, I requested the landlady to tap at her door and inform her that it was ready. To my great surprise I was informed that she had not yet returned since she left home in the morning. I waited for more than an hour, but as she did not make her appearance I dined without her. Night came on, still she did not return. I waited up for her till considerably past midnight, and then went to bed, greatly alarmed at the non-appearance of the poor woman.

When I arose the next morning I inquired of the landlady whether Mme. Reumont had returned. "She had not, nor had she received any intelligence of her." What had become of the poor creature I could not imagine, and for some time I was at a loss what steps to take to find her, for all my animosity had vanished at the recollection of her helpless condition. At last I resolved that, immediately after I had finished my breakfast, I would make an application at the nearest police-station for advice and assistance.

I ordered my breakfast, and while it was preparing I occupied myself with looking over my morning paper. When I came to the police reports, that under the head of Marlborough street caught my earnest attention.

It stated that, shortly before the closing of the court, a police constable, accompanied by a sergeant in the Guards, brought before the magistrates an elderly, ladylike woman, with a slight foreign accent, charged with creating a disturbance that morning in Hyde Park. It appeared that during an inspection of one of the regiments, the prisoner rushed forward and called upon the soldiers to obey her as their sovereign, and on the police attempting to remove her, she behaved in so violent a manner that she was taken into custody. The sergeant corroborated the policeman's evidence, but stated that it was his colonel's hope that no punishment would be awarded the poor creature, as she was evidently insane. The magistrate asked the prisoner whether she had any defence to make; but he could obtain no answer. During the examination the prisoner continued to weep bitterly, wringing her hands the while, and predicting the speedy death of the sergeant. The magistrate inquired whether any one present was acquainted with the

poor woman, and an inspector of police, who had that moment entered the court, replied that she exactly answered the description of one of two maniacs who had escaped from a respectable lunatic asylum, and for whose detention a reward had been offered. The other was a gentleman, but, as yet, no information had been received of him, though, perhaps, through the prisoner, some clue might be obtained to his present residence. It was the more necessary, he said, as the poor man was afflicted with a most absurd monomania.

Although I was pleased to hear that Mme. Reumont was again in safe hands, I could not conceal my indignation at the description that miserable, maniacal, organ-building doctor had given of me. Fortunately, no one in town knew my address but my solicitor, and I called on him as soon as I had finished my breakfast, and begged him not to betray me. He promised me he would not, and insisted I should call on him daily to let him know how I got on with my inventions, so great was the interest he felt in them. He also requested I would inform him the moment my wife arrived in England, as his wife particularly wished to see her. Both his requests I promised to obey, and I left him with my mind considerably more at ease.

I now began to work assiduously at my invention, taking care the while to avoid any subject not immediately connected with my new locomotive engine. I determined not to hurry it, but to complete what I had undertaken carefully and well. All went on for some time most prosperously. One morning, however, a circumstance occurred, which at first appeared but of small moment, but which gradually opened out till it became of terrible interest.

I was occupied with my morning paper, when my at-

tention was arrested by the description of some experiments in spiritualism which had been performed by Mr. Home. At first I met with nothing very exciting, till I came to the description of his rising from his chair into the air, and floating round the ceiling, leaving marks upon it, so indisputably, as to prove the fact, even if the testimony of several witnesses of unblemished veracity had not also attested it. Over and over again did I read the description, and on each reading my astonishment increased in proportion. The more I reflected on the feat, the more stupendous it appeared. My own terrible invention sank into comparative insignificance beside it. Here was the same effect produced by an effort of the will which I had accomplished only by the most profound mathematical study. Nay, more, mine was merely the product of mechanical ingenuity; here was a product which set all laws of mechanics at open defiance.

I had one hope left, and that was, that the whole would prove to be a hoax, and I made, among those I was acquainted with, inquiries on the subject, but the deeper I went in the question the more perfect did the evidence appear. I collected from indisputable witnesses that the experiments took place as related, and I had no alternative but to believe them.

The more I reflected on the subject the more astounded I became. Here was a power which conquered every law of natural philosophy. Here a heavy body floated in a fluid whose specific gravity was infinitely lighter than itself. The less was more than the greater; the lighter heavier than the more ponderous. The Almighty, when he formed the world, established the principle of the earth's attraction as the basis of His work; here His omnipotent fiat was set at naught with perfect facility and impunity. Who was this being who set Heaven's

laws at open defiance? Could he be a man? The idea was absurd. Could he be an angel? No, or he would not have warred against God's laws. There was but one conclusion left, he must be Satan himself in the guise of a man. None other could have obtained a power of the kind. Further reflection tended to confirm me in the opinion. Mr. Home (I prefer calling him by that name), at his will, could rise in the air. The density of the air was the less the greater was its distance from the earth. The lighter the atmosphere the swifter must be Mr. Home's progress through it. When he had reached an altitude where the rarefication of the air became painful to man his velocity would increase. Swifter and swifter would his flight become till he had emerged beyond the earth's atmosphere, when, unimpeded by that fluid, his velocity would be that of thought itself.

Once, a ray of hope presented itself that I might be mistaken in the conclusion I had arrived at. Although the velocity with which he could quit the earth was supernatural, the means by which he could revisit it appeared wanting; but this seeming flaw in my reasoning, alas! soon vanished, and the process by which he could return appeared to my mind with terrible distinctness. If from his inhabiting the ponderable human form, he could rise through the lighter atmospheric fluid, by resuming his imponderable spirit-nature, he would naturally descend through the air with equal rapidity, his flight being the more rapid as the atmosphere, nearer the earth, became the denser. All the combinations now appeared to me in their proper and perfect light, proving with what awful velocity he could quit or visit the earth at his pleasure. Oh! how fearfully sublime did the impious poetry of his nature now seem to me! how contemptible was the machinery, in comparison, used by

Milton to embody his Satan, and which, till that moment, had been considered by me as so grand!

I now began to consider what could be Mr. Home's mission on earth. Little by little the truth became apparent. An old Eastern tradition is extant, that evil spirits can physically do no evil, unless by the hands of mortals, and, like most traditions, it was evidently founded on truth. Mr. Home was certainly seeking a mortal who would carry out his intentions in his war against the world, if not the universe. And who could that mortal be but myself, who had invented a system somewhat analogous to his own, but which in no way infringed on the laws of natural philosophy? and if his spiritual power were united to my mechanical power, and used by the same hand, what would be the result? The power of Heaven itself must succumb to the combination.

The moment this terrible thought occupied my brain my misery and alarm knew no bounds. That Mr. Home was now upon earth solely to find me out I was convinced. I determined to avoid him that he might not tempt me. I inquired of my different acquaintances for a description of Mr. Home's personal appearance, that I might know him when I saw him, and thus escape him. Afterwards, when in the street I saw any one answering his description, I immediately fled another way. One day, however, in turning a corner, I met a person who appeared so perfectly to resemble him that I immediately concluded it was he. Being close to him, and impossible to avoid him, I determined to attack him resolutely and drive him from me. I attempted it, but he was too strong for me, and he gave me in charge to the police. Too late I found out my mistake, but the magistrate, falling into the usual error, concluded I was insane, and

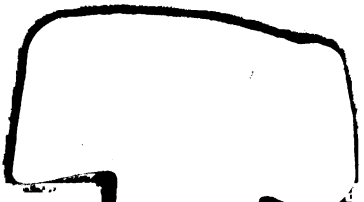
refused to let me go till some one undertook to take charge of me. My solicitor was sent for. He kindly assured the magistrate that he would be answerable for my future conduct, and I was then released.

Notwithstanding the assurances of my solicitor to the contrary, I felt certain that Mr. Home was still seeking for me. So painful was the impression it made on my mind, that the arrival of my dear wife in England the next day hardly gave me the slightest joy. She, however, was as kind and affectionate as it was possible to be. My distress of mind increased to such an extent that even my solicitor began to believe in the truth of my statements, and suggested that if I were again to reside in some respectable asylum, where great care was used to preclude even the possibility of a visit from Mr. Home, it would be a source of great comfort to me. I immediately caught at the suggestion, but I positively refused to be again placed under the care of Dr. Meadows. This he immediately agreed to, and proposed an asylum near Salisbury, celebrated for the skill of its proprietors and the admirable general arrangements of their establishment. To this I consented, on condition that I should be allowed an interview with its physician prior to placing myself under his care. By a singular coincidence, my solicitor told me he had called on him that morning about some business of his own, and that he was at that moment waiting his return at his office. He proposed at once sending a cab for him, to which I immediately agreed. When the physician arrived I found him a most gentlemanly, intelligent man, who entered immediately into my views. He admitted my reasonable terror of Mr. Home, and assured me the first order he would give should be that that gentleman should never, under any pretext, be allowed to enter the asylum. I

then gave my consent to the arrangement, and the next day I found myself domiciled in my new abode.

When I first entered it, I felt somewhat sorrowful at finding myself in the society of total strangers, but the next morning that feeling was considerably modified. After breakfast, as I was walking on the lawn behind the house, I saw a person emerge from one of the side-walks, and, on nearer approach, I found it to be my old friend Xerxes. She appeared delighted to see me. She informed me that she had at first been taken to Dr. Meadows's establishment, but, in consequence of his organ-building mania, she had refused so resolutely to remain there that they were obliged to remove her. She was, at present, most comfortable, and she liked not only all the arrangements, but the society she was in as well. I complimented her on her determination not to remain in Shirley Hall, and we passed the morning very agreeably together.

In conclusion, my mind soon recovered its proper tone, my health improved, and I found both occupation and amusement in compiling my adventures in Shirley Hall Asylum; and, lastly, from the admirable arrangements of the establishment I am at present residing in, I am in no dread of a visit from Mr. Home—my spirit is at ease, and the universe is saved from destruction!

THE END.

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